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PRESENTS



100% UNOFFICIAL PSP LAUNCH GUIDE

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PSM'S PSP LAUNCH GUIDE



PSP LAUNCH DATE:

IT'S FINALLY HERE! The world's first true 3D portable game system, the PSP! If you're reading this, you've probably either picked one up, or plan to sometime soon. Either way, congratulations — you'll soon enter a whole new gaming world, where you have the power of a home system in the palms of your hands! This book is here to make sure that you get the most out of your PSP experience, so turn the page and let's kick this thing off!



MARCH 24th, 2005


 PSM
PRESENTS

PSP

LAUNCH

KNOW YOUR PSP

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START

KNOW YOUR PSP

PSP, meet your new owner. Owner, meet the PSP. Over the next several pages, we'll help you get to know each other. Consider this your crash course in PSP-ology.

Examining the PSP 008

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Playing Games 014



The PSP Hardware

Up close with the king of handheld gaming

Could there possibly be any more buttons crammed onto the PSP? We doubt it. But every one that's there has a very specific purpose, some of which aren't covered in the official PSP manual. We've even got the lowdown on what those funny little undocumented features are all about.



BATTERY COVER RELEASE
Hold in on this to slide the battery cover off.

L BUTTON

It's like the L1 button on the PS2 controller, but it isn't analog.

DIRECTIONAL BUTTONS

Controls the game using digital input. Best for puzzle games, etc. Also used to navigate the XMB interface.

ANALOG STICK

Provides precision control in 360 degrees with 256 levels of sensitivity in all directions. Great for racing games like *Ridge Racer* and *Need For Speed Underground Rivals*.

STRAP HOLDER

Attach the provided or another carrying strap of your choice here.

HOME BUTTON

Lets you exit to the XMB when pressed during gameplay, or pauses movies/music and allows you to change system settings.

VOLUME BUTTONS

Increases or decreases game, music, and movie volume for the built-in speakers and headphones.





MEMORY STICK SLOT

Open this cover to insert a Memory Stick DUO.

BATTERY COVER

The battery is underneath this part of the right hand grip.

UMD DRIVE COVER

Pops open when you slide the Eject switch.

THUMBScrew HOLES

For locking down USB peripherals.

IR Port

For data transfer and maybe using PSP as a fancy TV remote?



OPEN LATCH

Opens the UMD drive.

USB PORT

For connecting to a PC/Mac/PS2.

STAND HOLES

For sitting PSP in an optional stand.

DC POWER IN

Where the AC adapter connects.



HEADPHONE PORT

Accepts a standard mini-jack and has extra pins for Sony's corded playback remote.

CHARGING TERMINALS

Potentially designed for a charging dock.



R BUTTON

It's like the R1 button on the PS2 controller, but it isn't analog.

ACTION BUTTONS

For performing game actions, selecting options in the XMB interface, and controlling movie/music playback.

POWER SWITCH

Slide it up to to the PSP on. Slide it up briefly to put the PSP into sleep mode. Slide it up and hold to completely turn off the PSP. Slide it down to set "Hold" mode intended to prevent any button presses from interfering with music playback if your PSP is in a pocket, etc.

DISPLAY BUTTON

Cycles through three brightness levels (four if the PSP is plugged into the AC adapter).

SOUND BUTTON

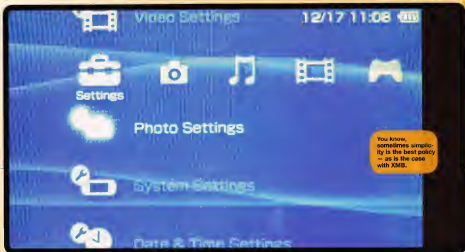
Hold it in to mute the PSP; tap it to select from EQ presets in movies and music.

SELECT BUTTON

Used as an additional function button in games.

START BUTTON

Starts/pauses games, music, and movies.



The XMB Interface

XMB: It's as easy as 1-2-3!

This "Cross Media Bar" — as it's been dubbed by Sony — is how you interact with your PSP in almost every way. It's also the same interface used by the fledgling PSX (a PS2/DVR/DVD recorder combo unit) in Japan and Sony's upcoming line of high-end televisions. So, in other words, it's a good thing to know how it works. It might also be an indication of how PS3 will handle different forms of content — it works so well, we'd be happy if that turned out to be the case.

RAISING THE BAR

Turn on the PSP and you see the first section of the XMB: "Game." You can scroll down to access things such as a saved game manager, play a UMD game, etc. You can scroll left at any point to access

"Video," again for "Music," next is "Photo," and finally "Settings." We explain each subsection in more detail starting on page 12.

HANDY INFO

The XMB is brilliant; it's way easier and faster than using the Browser and System Settings on PlayStation 2. It also provides you with some handy info, including date/time and, very important, battery level. The little battery icon in the upper right of the screen has three bars. Three is great, two is okay, but when you get down to one, start thinking about running off AC or recharging. Selecting the Memory Stick option in each of the four media sections (game, movie, music, photo) will display how much space you have left on your stick... very handy.

HELPFUL TIP

So, you're in the middle of a game, and you want to check the time or battery level? You don't need to quit out to the XMB — just pause your game (to be safe) and press the "Home" button. You'll get a black screen asking if you want to quit the game, but more importantly, the screen shows the time, battery level icon, and volume level (just in case you were curious — it's also easier to adjust it here than while you're playing). Select "No" and you'll be back in the game in a snap.

DID YOU KNOW?

The cool "lava lamp" background of the XMB changes color from month to month to keep things fresh.

XMB AT A GLANCE

Settings

- NETWORK UPDATE
- USB CONNECTION
- VIDEO SETTINGS
- PHOTO SETTINGS
- SYSTEM SETTINGS
- DATE & TIME SETTINGS
- POWER SETTINGS
- SOUND SETTINGS
- SECURITY SETTINGS
- NETWORK SETTINGS

Photo

- MEMORY STICK

Music

- UMD (IF INSERTED)
- MEMORY STICK

Video

- UMD (IF INSERTED)
- MEMORY STICK

Game

- GAME SHARING
- SAVED DATA UTILITY
- UMD (IF INSERTED)
- MEMORY STICK

LUMINES

P U Z Z L E F U S I O N

are you lumines?

*bust blocks, groove through puzzles and
jam wirelessly against friends
stack 'em right and you'll unlock
lush levels and buttery beats
want to be lumines?*

*"The game many are already
calling the best game for PSP."*

—IGN

LUMINES



Suggestive Themes

BANDAI



PSP



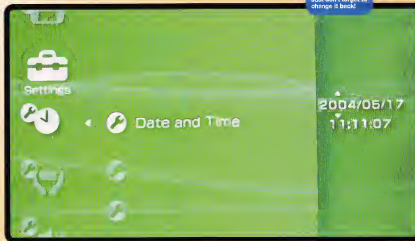
UBISOFT

System Settings

Bend the PSP to your will — just don't actually bend it!

Sure, you can read about all of PSP's numerous system settings in the manual, but there are a few that are important enough to warrant a little more explaining.

Try changing the menu to switch background colors. Just don't forget to change it back!



1. NETWORK UPDATE

The PSP manual devotes a sentence or two to this option. Maybe it's because they're not quite sure what it will do yet... who knows. Here's the deal: once you've set your PSP up to connect to a wireless network (at home, the office, school, a

coffee shop, wherever), you can choose this option and have the PSP connect online to look for updates to its operating system. Big deal, right? Well, actually, it is.

You see, whether they want you to know about it or not, Sony is planning

some really big enhancements for the PSP which will be made available via the Network Update feature. Things like: email, web browsing, and calendar tools. Also, the built-in MP3 player, video player, and photo viewer can be updated to extra features.

2. SYSTEM SETTINGS

Sounds pretty vague, huh? There are actually a couple of important items under this heading, one of which you'll definitely use more than a few times. The first is the nickname of your system. You can call it whatever you want, within a set number of characters. This is for identifying yourself when playing LAN or online games, so make it something memorable. If you just call it "My PSP" you'll look pretty lame when joining network

games. Something more catchy, like "Thrillhouse," will get their attention.

This sub-menu is also where you format Memory Sticks — something you need to do the first time you use them (or if you want to erase everything on the one you're currently using — although who'd want to do that?) so that they have the directories they need on them for game saves, music, and photos.

3. POWER SAVE SETTINGS

Get more out of your PSP battery! It's amazing how much longer your rechargeable pack will last if you set the PSP to dim the XMB screen after a couple of minutes of non-use, or put the PSP into sleep mode if you sit it down while playing a game and forget to do so yourself. It's also a good idea to set your WLAN power save to something fairly short, since the PSP's wireless feature eats battery power like you wouldn't believe, and it's easy to forget to switch it off.

NETWORKING TIP

Having trouble getting your PSP to connect to your home network? It might be because your wireless access point is configured to only run in 802.11g (fast) mode. If you want to let your PSP access it, you'll need to set it to run in 802.11b/g (mixed) mode.

Video, Photo, And Music

For when you actually want to play something other than games on your PSP

VIEWING PHOTOS

There's only one option under "Photo," and that's "Memory Stick." That's because, well, the only way to view photos on your PSP is off the Memory Stick — and they need to be saved in JPEG format, which is what pretty much every digital camera in the world uses.

First off, forget about organizing your

photos by date taken or alphabetically. The PSP actually displays the photos in a list ordered by the date and time they were saved to the Memory Stick. It's not exactly handy, but hopefully fixable with an update.

Some handy tip: Want to zoom in and out of your photos without using the on-screen menu? Hold down Square and move the analog stick up and down.

When zoomed in, you can move around the photo with the analog stick, and there'll be a handy little thumbnail of the entire photo down in the lower-left corner of the screen.

You can also rotate the photo clockwise by holding Square and press the right shoulder button; do the same thing, only hit the left shoulder button, to rotate it counterclockwise.

PLAYING MOVIES

If you're like us, bringing up the on-screen display while playing movies off Memory Stick or UMD is an extra step we'd rather just avoid. That's why we do the following with the PSP's controls for a nice shortcut.

- Fast Forward: Hold right on the D-Pad
- Fast Reverse: Hold left on the D-Pad
- Play/Pause: Press Start
- Slow-mo: Press right on the D-Pad while paused
- Stop: Press the Circle button
- Chapter Skip: Right shoulder button for forward, left shoulder button to skip back

There's also a handy trick involving the Home button. You can press it at any time while viewing a video to pause and temporarily exit to the XMB menu — you know, to check on exactly how much battery time is left, etc. Press Home again and you'll go right back into the movie where you left off.



PLAYING MUSIC

The same controller shortcuts that work for movies also work for music, except for the slow-mo option, of course. You can even perform the same trick with the Home button to jump between music and the XMB if you need to. Additionally, press the Sound Button located to the right of the PSP logo will switch through several EQ settings if you have headphones plugged in.

DEAR SONY

Please update the PSP operating system so that you can make music folders that go more than one level deep. As it stands, if we want to organize our music by artist and album, we have to make a folder called "Oingo Boingo - Only A Lad" under the "Music" folder on the Memory Stick. All we ask is to be able to make a folder for "Oingo Boingo," then one for each album they released under that. Pretty please?

The Game Menu

Game sharing? Games on Memory Sticks? What's all this about?

It's the menu you'll be using the most, but it's got a couple of features you'll probably never give a second thought to. Here's what they're all about.

GAME SHARING

This ambiguous option is really very cool, once you understand what it's all about. You see, some (and eventually many) PSP games will allow you to share demo versions of them with other PSP owners. You'll just need to be nearby the person you want to share with, then select the Game Share option in compatible games (Namco Museum does it now in Japan). They select the option in their PSP's XMB and you wirelessly "beam" the demo, mini-game, or what have you to them.

In some cases, the demo will be saved to their Memory Stick (or yours, if you're on the receiving end), but early examples of it we've seen have it stored in system memory, so once the PSP is turned off, the demo is gone.

MEMORY STICK BASED GAMES

Before too long, you'll be able to download demos of upcoming PSP games from the Internet, or get them off DVD-ROMs. When that time comes, they'll be stored in the Game folder on your Memory Stick, and show up when you select the Memory Stick option under the game section of the XMB menu. Until then, it's just an extra icon to look and dream about what the future will hold.



FUN WITH PSP GAME SAVES

Game saves have always been useful, but on PSP you can also have some fun "hacking" them — or at least the way they look.

SAVE DATA UTILITY

If you select this item, you'll see custom icons (and sometimes backgrounds, videos, and music) to represent all of the various game saves on your Memory Stick. What's really cool is that, by hooking your PSP up to your computer using a USB cable, you can actually grab the images and use them for other things, or, more fun even, create your own custom icons and backgrounds.

Here's what you need to do. Connect up your PSP and open the SAVE DATA folder on the Memory Stick. There's a folder in there for every game save you have on the stick. The trouble is, they're not named after the game, so you need to do some detective work to figure out which is which.

You can use any image-viewing program on your computer to do this. There are two files you need to concern yourself with: one starting with ICON (that's the save icon) and one with PIC, if the game uses a custom save data background. Both end with the .PNG extension.

BACKING UP SAVES

Want to keep your precious save data extra-safe? Make a folder called PSP SAVES on your computer and copy (not move) all of the folders from the SAVE DATA folder on your PSP Memory Stick to it. Perform the reverse to put them back onto the PSP if you need to later on.

MAKING YOUR OWN SAVE ICONS AND BACKGROUNDS

Be sure to back up the originals before you proceed. Once you've done that, you can use a program such as Photoshop to create your own custom save icons — just make sure they're PNG files with a resolution of 144x88. Name them the same as the icon you're replacing and copy them to the appropriate folder on the Memory Stick. Don't forget to back up the original!

Backgrounds are also PNG files and are 480x272 in resolution. They replace the file beginning with PIC in the save folder you're modifying.

EMAILING GAME SAVES

You can actually copy your saved game folders to your computer, zip them, and email them to friends. This is really cool for games such as Ridge Racer, where you can use this method with ghost car data so your friends can race against your best times!

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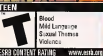


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For the PSP™ handheld entertainment system

PSP



HOW TO...

Now that you've gotten acquainted with your stunning new game system, you're ready for the advanced course. Here we'll show you techniques to maximize your PSP experience, including a few tricks that even Sony didn't think of.

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How to Get Bigger Memory Sticks For Less \$\$\$	022
How to Better Organize Your Music & Photos	024
How to Keep Your PSP Scratch-Free	025



HOME



VOL

Watch Your Own Videos on PSP

Where There's a Memory Stick and a Little PC Know-how, There's a Way



Sure, you can buy pre-recorded movie UMDs to watch on your PSP, that's not the only way to play video on it. In fact, with the right PC or Mac software and a little practice, you'll be able to watch most of the videos sitting on your computer on the PSP. Here's how!

FOR STARTERS

Video files, even on PSP's relatively small screen, can be pretty big. For instance, a movie trailer might only be around 10 megabytes, while entire TV episodes can easily break the 100MB barrier. So...

If you're serious about packing video onto your PSP, you should definitely consider a Memory Stick larger than the 32MB one that came with your PSP. We've created a guide to finding the right stick for the best price on page 22, so be sure to check that out to become a memory maven!

CONVERTING YOUR VIDEO

FOR THE PC: THE OFFICIAL WAY

Okay, let's get started. The first thing you're going to need is a PSP-compatible USB

cable. We've got that covered in our gear guide, which begins on page 26. Next, you need a PC running Microsoft Windows XP, and a commercial program called Sony Image Converter 2. Information on purchasing and downloading the program can be found at www.memorystick.com/psp. Image Converter has its own documentation and is incredibly simple, creating the appropriate directories on the PSP for you, etc. However, it's also fairly limited in terms of options for anyone who wants to get seriously into this aspect of the PSP.

FOR THE PC: THE NON-IMAGE CONVERTER WAY

Got that USB cable and PC running WinXP? Good. Ready to get your hands a little dirty with a free Japanese program that does more than Image Converter, but is also kinda tricky to use? Great.

Start off by heading to <http://www.nurs.org/~caloum/3gpp/> and downloading 3GP_Converter by clicking on the link called "3gp_converter.zip".

Unzip the file into a folder on your hard disk and run the "setup.exe" program. Don't fear all the gibberish — you'll see a list containing either funky symbols or Japanese characters (if you have Japanese language support installed in Windows). All you need to know is this: click on the line that says "MP4ファイル, PSP向け設定(直接出力)" (or the second line with the word "PSP" hidden among the gibberish — see image 1 at bottom of next page) and press your return key.

Now, run "3GP_Converter.exe". Choose the location you want to save your converted video files to (we use the desktop) by clicking the button highlighted in image 2. Next, select an encoding setting from the drop-down menu in the center of the dialog (see image 3). Try "QVGA, 29.97fps, 128kbps" for starters.

It's time to convert your video. It's as simple as dragging your video file onto the empty box at the top of the dialog (see image 4). You can even create a queue of videos by dragging multiple files into it. If the program gives you an error message, it's almost certainly because the type of video file you tried to convert isn't supported. We've had the best luck with .AVI files using the Divx or Xvid compression codecs.

3GP_Converter will otherwise create two files on your desktop (or wherever you

told it to save the converted video). One ends in ".MP4" (that's the video) and the other in ".THM" (it's a graphic icon used as a preview of the video when selecting from them on the PSP). Now head to the section of this how-to called "Copying your video to the PSP."

FOR THE MAC

There are a couple of freeware video-to-PSP programs for Mac OS X, but we like AltShiva (<http://heims.com/psp/altshiva0.9.1.dmg>) because it's not only feature-laden but also a free open-source app.

Here's the rundown on converting your videos for PSP in AltShiva. Upon installing and running the program (easy as opening the disk image, dragging the program to your Applications folder, and double-clicking the icon) you'll see one of several "tabs" for adjusting your conversion. Under the "Files" tab, tell the program where the original movie you want to convert is and where you want the PSP-ready videos it will create will be saved.

Under "Video," set your FPS to 29.97 and check the "Bittate" box and enter 768 next to it.

Skip to the "PSP" tab and make sure the box titled "Optimize for PSP" is checked. Underneath that, you can enter what you want the name of your video to be displayed as on your PSP. Next to that, you can click "Create THM File" and use the slider below the preview box to choose exactly what frame of the video you want your preview thumbnail to be made from.

Now, select the "Processing" tab and click "Go!"

Once your video is converted, you'll have two files — one ending in ".MP4" and one in ".THM" — in the location you told the program to save your output files to. You're now ready to put them onto your PSP, so head to the section of this how-to titled "Copying your video to the PSP."

COPYING YOUR VIDEO TO THE PSP

ON THE PC

To view the (hopefully) great-looking, PSP-ready video you just created, you first need to connect your PSP to your PC using your

USB cable. Turn on the PSP without a game inserted and go to the options screen. Scroll up and select "USB Connection." If everything's hooked up right, you should see your PSP as a removable storage device when you open "My Computer" on your desktop. If it's there, you're golden. If not, check that the cable is connected and that the PSP is displaying "USB mode" and not "Connect a USB cable" on its screen.

Connected up? Great. Open the PSP icon and you'll see a folder called PSP. Don't open it. Instead, create a new directory called "MP_ROOT" (minus the quotes) and open it. Now create a folder named "100MNV01" (again, without any quotation marks). This is where you'll put your videos.

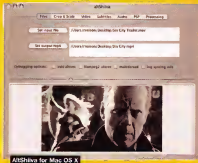
With that folder open, simply drag the .MP4 and .THM files from the location 3GP_Converter saved them to onto it. This will open a progress dialog showing the status of the file copy (if there files are large) and you'll notice the orange Memory Stick light on the front left of the PSP flashing. Wait until it stops, then exit USB mode on the PSP and disconnect the USB cable from it.

ON THE MAC

Before you can put your video(s) onto the PSP, you need to have a place on your Memory Stick for them to go.

Connect your PSP to your Mac using a USB A to 3pin Mini USB cable. Turn on the PSP without a game inserted, go to Options and select "USB Connection" and your PSP will appear as a removable drive on your desktop. Open it and create a folder called "MP_ROOT" (no quotes) and create a folder named "100MNV01" (no quotes there, either) inside of it. That's where the videos go.

Getting them there is as simple as dragging them from the location you told AltShiva to save them to into the MP_ROOT/100MNV01 folder on your Memory Stick. Once the PSP's Memory Stick access light stops flashing, eject the



PSP by highlighting its desktop icon and pressing Command+E (or dragging it to the trash in the Dock.)

PLAYING YOUR VIDEO ON THE PSP

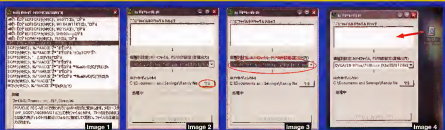
Now, scroll over to Video in the PSP's XMB menu and down to Memory Stick. Select it with X, and, if all went well, you'll see a file with the name of your original video file displayed if you used a PC (so it's a good idea to make sure you name your original video file something memorable like "Chris's First Birthday.avi" instead of "ctb10001.avi" to begin with). If you used a Mac, you already took care of that. Highlight the video, press X, and it will play. You can press Triangle to bring up the playback controls, d-pad over to the screen size icon in the top-left, and press X to zoom the video for the best possible fit. Congrats — you did it!

NEED MORE HELP?

If this seems like a lot to do to simply watch your own videos on the PSP, it is. Sony definitely hasn't made the process easy if you don't want to use their Image Converter program.

If you'd like to learn a lot more about PSP video conversion, here are two Internet message boards with more expert advice you should definitely check out!

- Gaming-Age Forum: <http://tinyurl.com/5mbgc> (free registration required)
- PS2Dev.org Forum: <http://tinyurl.com/5bbgo>



Select the second line with "PSP" in it. Choose where to save your files. Use this quality setting to start. Drag and drop to convert.

Play (Almost) Any PSP Game Online!

Square off against rivals across the country — or the world — in any network compatible game for free!

Sony's own PSP games may be the only ones when the system's released that have true online play out of the box, but that doesn't mean you can't play most of the other PSP launch games online. That's right: Any game with a wireless play mode — such as *Ridge Racer*'s "wireless battle" — can be played against others over the Internet. It's not exactly a simple process, but we're here to help you get up and running... er, gaming online!

WHAT YOU NEED

The requirements for playing PSP's wireless LAN games online aren't all that crazy, really. All you need is a PC running Windows XP, a broadband internet connection, a wireless networking card, and free software called Xlink Kai. Evolution VII available for download at www.teamxlink.co.uk.

Before buying a network card, check the PSP forum on Team Xlink's site to make sure it's compatible!



GETTING STARTED

Following the instructions on Team Xlink's site, download the program, set up a free "xtag" account, and install Xlink Kai on your computer of choice.

Team Xlink has great documentation on their site for getting online with Kai and finding people to play PSP games against, so we won't cover that here. We will, however, talk you through the trickiest part of getting Kai and your PSP to play nice together.

IF YOU NEED MORE HELP

The Team Xlink forums at www.teamxlink.co.uk are a great place to get help with connecting to Kai, especially if you have an "unusual" setup. It's frequented by friendly, helpful folks that'll be happy to take you on in some online PSP action once they've solved your dilemma!



HOW TO CONNECT

Okay, first things first. Make sure you've got your PSP set up for both infrastructure (for connecting to wireless access points) and Ad Hoc (for connecting your PSP directly to your PC wirelessly) modes using the instructions in the PSP manual.

Next, make sure that your PC is connected to your DSL/cable modem or router using an Ethernet cable and is able to go online.

In order to connect the PSP to your PC wirelessly, your computer will need to have — at minimum — an 802.11b wireless adapter (USB, PCI, etc.)

Now, here's the trickiest part of all... but it's not really that hard. Turn on your PSP and set its WLAN switch to "on." Next, load up a game that has a wireless multiplayer mode (we like to use *Ridge Racer* for this test) and select that mode. Select "host game," or whatever it happens to be called for that particular game.

On your PC, open the wireless networking settings icon in your Windows XP system tray. You should see your PSP listed under available wireless networks. Select it, connect using Ad Hoc Mode, and your system tray icon will light up to confirm that you're connected.

Once your computer and PSP are talking to each other, fire up Xlink Kai and log in. Click the magnifying glass icon in the far upper left on the Kai window to take a look at your connection status, then click the folder icon below it to make sure that Kai "sees" your PSP. If it does, you're set. If not, you can get troubleshooting help in the Team Xlink online forums.



FINDING GAMES, CONNECTING, PLAYING

You're almost there! Chances are good that there'll be plenty of other Xlink Kai users from the U.S. and Japan in the PSP Arena. There are sub arenas for each game, including their own live chat channels. One thing we've found helpful is to set your status to "hosting" and then simply (in the case of *Ridge Racer*, let's say) host a wireless battle as if you were playing with friends in the same room. Within no time, you'll see other players joining your game. You can also create your own private arenas with password protection, or limits on the number of people who can join a multiplayer game.

Keep in mind that how smoothly your gameplay is will depend on other players' location and ping times. But with a good group of players with good pings, it's nearly as good as playing with people 30ft away!



Pump Up Your PSP Audio

The PSP can put out some kickin' sound — don't let it go to waste!

PSP is the first handheld gaming system powerful enough to produce the same high quality music and sound you're used to hearing from home console games. While the unit's built-in speakers sound great, the right extras will give you audio that's glorious. Here's what we suggest...

PLAYING ON THE GO

You've gotta get a great pair of headphones — no "ifs", "ands" or "buts" about it. The ear-buds included with the PSP will give you a better audio experience than the system's built-in speakers, but you get what you pay for with those freebies.

There are plenty of better options out there — we can personally recommend Bose Triport Headphones (about \$130). They're lightweight, offer great bass and look pretty darn cool. They also cup your ears nicely without pressing in on them, making for a nice, comfy fit.

If you prefer ear-buds, Sony's own Phontopia line — specifically, model number MDR-EX71SL — will show you just how inferior those free buds are. Not only do they sound great, but they come with an extension cable and three different sizes of super-soft silicon ear-buds. These buds go further into your ear than most, which blocks out a lot of background noise and improves the bass.

PLAYING AT HOME

Hook it up to surround sound, baby! Sure, the PSP only sends out a basic stereo signal, but most modern receivers have settings that will pump your PSP sound through a full room of speakers. Even if you've just got a standard two-speaker set up, you can still plug 'em up to your nifty new handheld.

All you really need is a single cable, which can be easily found online, or in shops like Radio Shack. Ask for a "male stereo headphone to male RCA" cable — it looks like a stereo headphone jack on one end, with red and white composite plugs on the other. (It'll run you about five bucks.) Hook it up to the headphone jack in your PSP, connect the red and white plugs to your receiver, and you're good to go. Be sure to get a long cable, so you won't have to sit right next to your receiver while you play.

VOLUME TIP

If your UMD movies aren't loud enough for you, even with the volume turned all the way up, don't forget that you can set your max volume higher on the "Video" menu under "Settings." Higher volume drains the battery faster though, so be ready with a full charge.

You need to get better headphones, like this Bose Triport set. It cups your ears nicely, and provides great bass.



These Phontopia ear buds from Sony will put the PSP's freebies to shame.



Remember, you can use PSP's remote control with any pair of headphones.



This is the cable you'll need to hook PSP up to your stereo — check Radio Shack.

Become A PSP Power User!

Even more tricks you probably didn't even think to try with your PSP!

USE IT WITH GRAN TURISMO 4!

That's right. Although the PSP and GT4 don't have any official connectivity options, the PSP makes a great way to store and view the images you create in GT4's addictive Photo Mode. It's easy to do: When you go to save your Photo Mode image, connect your PSP to the PS2 via the USB port and switch it to USB Connection mode. Then, select the option in GT4 to copy your image(s) to a USB device.

Forget plain old keychain flash memory drives — PSP won't just store your GT4 snaps, it'll let you view them. The only thing you need to do to get this to work is connect your PSP up to your computer and drag the GT4 folder the game created on the Memory Stick into the PHOTO folder. Viola — you can now show off your Photo Mode pics wherever you go, and they look amazing on PSP's glorious screen!



USE IT AS A REMOVEABLE DRIVE

Every truly hardcore PSP owner should have a nice, big Memory Stick. Sure, using all that space to store MP3s and episodes of *Desperate Housewives* is cool, but more tech-savvy owners will recognize the PSP / massive Memory Stick combo as a great way to move large files from one computer to another.

Don't be afraid: You can copy anything to the root directory

of the Memory Stick — whether you're running Windows XP, Mac OS X, Linux, etc. Since it's a USB 2.0 device, the transfer speeds are nice and fast — we just recommend that you transfer files when the PSP is plugged into wall power, since transferring large amounts of data to and from the Memory Stick can really chew up battery power.

SERIOUSLY SILLY SUGGESTIONS

Just when you thought PSP couldn't possibly do anything else, here are a couple

of off-the-wall ideas to try out! Use the PSP as an emergency flashlight — heck, the screen is certainly bright enough. Extra points if you hold it under your chin to pull the old "spooky flashlight

face" gag on friends and family. Use the PSP's super-shiny self as a mirror. 'Cuz, you know, you don't want that sexy-looking PSP upstaging you in public.

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and talk directly with the editors of PSM! (Help
'em out, folks, they don't have many friends.)

LOOK FOR US ONLINE!



PSMChrisSells



PSMRandyNelson



PSMBenDencruz



PSMEricBrubaker



PSMKaiserHwang

Protect Your PSP!

**Protect
your PSP
investment
with these
handy tips!**

REPLACE THE CASE

We know you don't want to hear this, considering the amount of money you just spent on your PSP, but you should really spring for a new case as well. That padded sleeve the PSP comes with will keep the screen safe from scratches, but its open-ended design offers too little protection if you actually drop the PSP and that exposed corner hits the concrete. You need a real case that protects the entire unit. Check out the following pages, which highlight several different cases that will better protect your investment.

KEEPING THE SCREEN SCRATCH FREE

The PSP's screen may deliver gorgeous images, but it also scratches very easily. Plus, similar to what we said above, most cases can't protect the screen while you're actually using the device.

However, there is a solution. Several companies have designed special, transparent, removable lenses that fit right over the top of your PSP screen, offering practically invisible protection.

Intec's \$4.99 Screen Lens is shown here. BoxWave's products include a \$12.95 washable, reusable, anti-glare, fingerprint-and-dust-repellent lens. Hori's \$8.99

Privacy Filter not only protects, but also makes it so that only a person looking straight down at your PSP screen can see it — it's helpful if you're playing a multiplayer game with someone who likes to glance over at your screen.

Finally, this is kind of a no-brainer, but always put your PSP back into its case any



A good micro-fiber cloth is the key to keeping the PSP's highly reflective surface crystal clear and scratch-free.

time you're not using it. And for the love of all that is good, never ever just toss it into a backpack, purse, or pocket where things like coins, keys, or even loose UMD discs could come into contact with the unprotected screen.

FINGERPRINT POLICE

Finally, the PSP's glossy surface will show each and every fingerprint unless you

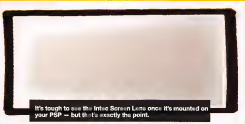
screen permanently cloudy, and if they seep under your buttons or D-pad, they could wreak havoc with your PSP's internals. Also, never wipe your PSP with anything but the softest, most lint-free cloth you can find. Paper towels, while handy, are a serious no-no because they leave lint at best and tiny scratches at worst.

So, what can you use? We've found that the super-soft, finely woven, micro-fiber cloths used to clean eyeglasses, camera lenses, or computer monitors work perfectly, and usually remove even serious contaminants like dirt, oil, or pancake syrup. If it's really gunked up, you can moisten your wiping cloth with a tiny amount of plain, old water — just be sure not to let it get under the buttons or D-pad.

DO NOT DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT

Of course, few cases will protect your PSP when the risk of dropping it is the greatest:

while you're actually playing the system. For that reason, there's no shame in using the wrist strap that Sony packs in with the unit. Get in the habit of putting the strap around your wrist whenever you're holding your PSP, just in case it slips out of your hand for one reason or another.



It's tough to see the Intec Screen Lens once it's mounted on your PSP — but that's exactly the point.

wash your hands before every use. That's not always an option, so here's our advice for how to get rid of all that finger grease.

First, while it may seem reasonable to grab the ol' Windex bottle and squirt away, that would be a potentially horrid thing to do. Cleaners that contain alcohol or ammonia have the potential to leave your

Gear Up!

Granted, your PSP already comes with lots of goodies: a 32MB Memory Stick, a soft case, even headphones and a wrist strap. However, there are still plenty of other products that can help protect, prolong, and even enhance your PSP experience. Here are some of the most useful and unique add-ons we've seen so far.



NYKO PSP CHARGER CASE DS

MSRP: \$69.99

So far, this is our favorite PSP case. First off, it's made of metal and lined with neoprene, so it cradles your PSP safely and snugly, and should be able to take a fall with little to no damage whatsoever. It also has its own internal battery that's three times as powerful as the PSP battery. This means that any time you put your PSP into the case, the case battery starts recharging your PSP battery. Plus, it's supposedly even watertight — and granted, we may never be in a situation where that's important, but it's nice to know, just the same.

LOGITECH PLAYGEAR POCKET CASE

MSRP: \$19.99

If the Nyko case is too expensive, you could do well with this polycarbonate hard shell from the very reputable folks at Logitech. The lid doubles as a sun visor and a PSP stand, and you can even play your PSP without removing it fully from the case.



PELICAN SKIN GRIP WITH SCREEN GUARD

MSRP: \$9.95

For those who truly don't want the hassle of carting around a whole separate case, Pelican's offering slips right over your PSP and needn't be removed. Granted, the rubbery coating won't offer the same protection as some of the more expensive cases, but you can't fault its ease of use, and it comes with a clear, anti-glare screen guard as well.



NYKO SCREEN ARMOR OR PELICAN FACE ARMOR

MSRP: \$9.99

If you're not worried about dropping your PSP, but you still want to protect its delicate screen, at least two companies have designed protective flaps that mount onto the back of your system and keep things safe. Pelican's Face Armor is made of hard plastic lined with neoprene, covers the entire surface, and comes with four UMD protectors (see "Protecting Your Games" later in this section). Nyko's Screen Armor takes a similar approach, but it trades the plastic for a sheet of aluminum and covers the most crucial area of the PSP — that big, beautiful screen.



NYKO THEATER EXPERIENCE PSP

MSRP: \$99.99

It's costly, but this multi-purpose case will definitely take good care of your machine. It shares most of the Charger Case's strengths: aluminum and neoprene construction, and an internal battery that can charge your PSP battery on the go. However, it also adds in its own speakers and the ability to hold your PSP up at an angle, creating one of the smallest, most portable widescreen theaters in the world.



HIP GEAR DELUXE CARRYING CASE

MSRP: \$14.99

For those gamers who would rather take all their gear along at once, Hip Gear offers this model, which has plenty of room for not only your PSP, but also its power pack, headphones, and a UMD or two. Intec makes a similar offering, but their case ups the ante even further with a metal exterior and a velcro divider perfect for holding a few UMDs in their jewel boxes.

MEMORY MANAGEMENT

The 32MB memory stick that comes with your PSP is great for just saving games. However, if you really want to take full advantage of the PSP's ability to store and play pictures, movies, and music, you're going to need more memory — a lot more.

Luckily, the Memory Stick PRO Duo is currently available in a wide range of sizes, all the way up to 1GB and (soon) 2GB. Better still, SanDisk has come up with a line of gaming-targeted sticks that look at press time to be a bit more affordable than their Sony-manufactured counterparts.

So, how much memory do you need? To be honest, we'd recommend getting the highest-capacity memory card you can afford. A 1GB stick may look too expensive to you, but when you've crammed your saved games, an entire movie, and a few CDs worth of music onto it and you still have room for some pictures of ol' Fido, you'll be completely convinced that it was worth the extra coin.



SanDisk 512MB Memory Stick (\$89.99)



SanDisk 128MB Memory Stick (\$39.99)



SanDisk 1GB Memory Stick (\$149.99)



SanDisk 256MB Memory Stick (\$64.99)



Sony 512 MB Memory Stick (\$104.99)



You'll want to be careful which USB 2.0 cable you buy — only a USB A to B cable will work with the PSP.

FILE TRANSFER: USB CABLE

One of the biggest keys to getting the most out of your PSP is tracking down the right USB 2.0 cable. After all, it's what you're going to use to connect to your PC, your PS2, and probably your PS3 as well (unless the PS3 goes the wireless route).

The thing is, there are actually at least three different types of USB cable, and only one will actually fit into the plug on the PSP. For the record, it's officially called a "USB A to 5-pin USB" cable — but we'd recommend just taking this picture or your PSP itself into the store and matching up the ends. The correct cable should have a typical, flat USB connector on one end, but on the other end it will have a smaller, flat plug that, if you look at it straight on, is actually wider across on the bottom than on the top.

The good news is that, once you've found this particular cable, they're all pretty much the same — the brand and manufacturer aren't terribly important. If you have trouble tracking down the cable in your local gaming store, check the camera department. This is the same kind of cable that all of Sony's digital cameras use, so it's likely you'll be able to find it there.

PROTECTING YOUR GAMES

The UMD may come encased in plastic, but it's far from indestructible. Several companies have made durable slipcases like the Hip Gear UMD Protector (7.99 for four) to keep your UMDs safe and sound. Intec's "Game Case" cases (shown at right) hold three games each and come in packs of two for \$4.99. That's great protection for less than a dollar a game.



Pelican Desktop Audio Charging Cradle (MSRP \$29.95)



DESKTOP HOME THEATER

There are a number of available stands for the PSP, which enable you to watch a movie while still keeping your hands free for popcorn and soda. Many, like Pelican's Desktop Audio Charging Cradle, recharge your PSP's battery and have their own, beefier set of speakers. It's not going to be available immediately at launch, but it looks to be worth waiting for. If you don't need something that fancy, Intec's no-frills Docking Station sticks to the basics; it holds your PSP at the desired angle, and enables you to use your existing power cord to charge your PSP while you watch.



BATTERY LIFE

If the PSP has a weakness, it has to be that it takes a ton of power to keep that big, gorgeous screen lit, to keep that data-packed UMD spinning, and to keep you connected via its 802.11b wireless port. In other words, your battery is going to get drained quickly. Luckily, there are already several wise folks working on ways to make this a non-issue. In addition to cases like Nyko's, which charge your battery while the PSP is not in use, Pelican has come up with a "Power Brick", a portable, external battery that plugs into your PSP just like your normal power adapter, and can either power your PSP when you're away from an outlet or recharge your PSP battery 1 to 2 full times.



Pelican's \$19.95 Power Brick is just one of the many products designed to compensate for the PSP's voracious appetite for power. Gear up!

LAUNCH GAMES

Here they are, PSP's first 24 titles! These games will either be available the same day that PSP goes on sale, or within the week or two afterwards. This is probably the best launch lineup we've ever seen for a game system, in terms of both quality and quantity. There's something here for every type of gamer!

Ape Escape: On The Loose	032
ATV Offroad Fury: Blazin' Trails	034
Darkstalkers Chronicle: The Chaos Tower ..	036
Dynasty Warriors	038
FIFA 2005	040
Gretzky NHL	042
Lumines	044
Metal Gear ACID	046
MLB	048
MVP Baseball	050
NBA 2005	052
NBA Street: Showdown	054
Need For Speed Underground Rivals	056
NFL Street 2	058
Rengoku: Tower Of Purgatory	060
Ridge Racer	062
Smart Bomb	064
Spider-Man 2	066
Tony Hawk's Underground 2 Remix	068
Tiger Woods PGA Tour	070
Twisted Metal Head-On	072
Untold Legends: Brotherhood Of the Blade .	074
Wipeout Pure	076
World Tour Soccer	078



APE ESCAPE: ON THE LOOSE

APE ESCAPE:
ON THE LOOSEDESIGNED BY
Sony Q&AMADE BY
Sony Q&A

WHAT IS THIS?
Ape Escape: On the Loose is a game where you have to travel back through time to capture 200 monkeys with a big net. Also, you get to see lots of fun, clever gadgets.

IT COMES OUT
in Spring

TECHNICAL
Everyone

RECOMMEND
Ape Escape: On the Loose is a great game for everyone.

APE ESCAPE:
ON THE LOOSE

The PSone classic gets another shot

Okay, get this: a sweet little monkey named Spector is transformed into a super-intelligent villain after putting on the professor's experimental new helmet. Then, using a stolen time machine, he takes an army of 200 apes back through history to erase humanity's very existence!

As a young friend of the professor's named Spike (must be the hair), you have to chase Spector back through time, catch all of his monkey army in your net, and put a

stop to their catastrophic plan.

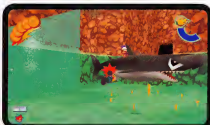
This appears to be a fairly straight port of the PSone classic, minus the innovative dual-stick controls of the original. Still, the gadgets (such as a remote control car, monkey radar and boomerang) are a blast to play with, and there are plenty of nutty mini-games for wireless multiplayer action.

If you missed this game the first time around, here's your chance to make good. It's more fun than a barrel of... well, you know.

These Apes
is Crazy!

The monkeys aren't usually very hostile (well, not until late in the game, at least), but they can be damn tricky to put into a net. They're good at hiding in hard-to-reach spots, and if they spot you, they'll take off running like there's no tomorrow. Spike can crawl to sneak up on them, but even more important is how he uses his gadgets to gain an advantage.





Although the PSone-era graphics aren't going to win any awards on PSP, *Apes Escape* is still an amazing action-platformer. The level designs are great, the gadgets are fun to play around with and the game is packed with humor and charm. You'll love hunting down those naughty monkeys.



Fecal-Flinging Breakdown

Spike's health is shown using those cookies... which doesn't exactly promote good eating.

The monkeys are often tucked away in tough-to-reach places — you'll have to use your noggin to nab 'em.

Spike's gadgets can be equipped to the action buttons (like in Nintendo's *Zelda* games).

Pressing the L button will let you look around in first-person view to spot those pesky apes.

Spike is normally a happy boy, but apparently he really hates the idea of monkey freedom.

The view may be pretty, but it's instant death if Spike goes over the side of the game's many cliffs.



ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS



Racing on dirt, mud, ice, water or grass will have a huge impact on the way you race.

ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS

PUBLISHED BY
Sony CEA

WHAT IS THIS?
Zoot through mud, snow and more in 24 different ATVs, 30 unique environments, and six distinct types of terrain (specifically, snow, dirt, mud, ice, water and grass). You'll also have to deal with interactive objects and instances like ramps, tires, cones and trees.

IT COMES OUT
in Spring

HOW MANY
Screens

WORTH THE
Money? Lead-to-head multiplayer

ATV OFFROAD FURY: BLAZIN' TRAILS

Play in the mud, snow, ice and more!

Sony's multimillion-selling racing series is set to hit the PSP at full speed. Look for the same brand of intense, free-roaming off-road action you've come to expect on PlayStation 2, with 24 different ATVs, 30 unique environments, and six distinct types of terrain (specifically, snow, dirt, mud, ice, water and grass). You'll also have to deal with interactive objects and instances like ramps, tires, cones and trees.

Whether you prefer to race

from a first- or third-person view, ATV has you covered — you can choose either type in any of the game's modes, which include Freestyle, Career, Training, or various mini-games. Best of all, the game not only supports head-to-head wireless play, but it's also one of the first PSP games to offer full online multiplayer! Whether your friends are close by or thousands of miles away, as long as they have access to a wireless internet connection, the race is on!

Down & Dirty Action

This isn't your typical "Sunday afternoon drive" racing game — to win, you're gonna have to get your hands dirty. Actually, your hands, your feet, your vehicle... everything will get covered in mud. But that's what makes this type of racing so fun — the dirt and snow gives the controls a slip-sliding feel that makes the action even more intense than usual.



Some tracks are built inside huge stadiums, while others cut through the great outdoors.



Snow, mud, water, dirt, ice — that's why they call it an "All Terrain Vehicle." The only thing crazier than trying to race on this stuff would be to attempt tricks while doing it, and yep, tricks are in here, too. All of the fun of ATV racing, without those nagging collar bone fractures.



Four-Wheelin' Breakdown

Detailed race info is shown here, such as the names of the racers holding the top four positions.

You'll catch a lot of air during the race, but if you don't stick your landings, you'll lose a lot of time.

This corner displays your current lap number and your times. Everything you'd want to know is always on-screen.

This course map only shows your current position and the leader's — great for a quick glance.

ATVs have a "bouncy, slide-around" feel that makes them super fun to race with.

You really won't need this speedometer — either you're going fast enough to pass the next guy, or not.



DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER

This probably isn't how Dimitri's vision of being with two Mortigans went...

DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER

DEVELOPED BY
Capcom

MADE BY
Biossne

WHY IS THIS
2D fighting?

IT CAMEX OUT
in March

ESSE: SAYING
fare

MODE/PLAYER
2-player battle

DARKSTALKERS CHRONICLE: THE CHAOS TOWER

Capcom's classic fighter returns!

It's been a long wait, but Capcom's classic fighting series has finally returned! This "all-star" version of Darkstalkers packs in characters and features from the entire series: Darkstalkers, Night Warriors: Darkstalkers Revenge, and Darkstalkers 3. You can take on new modes of play like Tower mode, Limit Battle mode, and League mode. Or, go head-to-head against one opponent or several in a wireless tournament. Longtime fans will notice that

Chronicle doesn't run in true widescreen — the game's original aspect ratio is simply stretched to fit the PSP's display — so the characters look a little wide. If that bugs you though, you can switch back to the original aspect ratio, which fills the extra space on the left and the right with borders.

This is easily the best-looking fighting game released for any handheld system. If you've got an itch for 2D fighting on the go, this will definitely scratch it.

Now That's Old School!

Even though the PSP was designed as a powerhouse 3D gaming machine, classic 2D-style titles still benefit from all that extra muscle. Chronicle is about as pretty on the small screen as Darkstalkers has ever looked on home consoles, or even in the arcade. This should be just the game for fighting purists who still believe in the old ways.



Lilith looks all nice and tiend — until she showers you with a thousand arrows. Not cool, Lilith.



Fighting fans haven't seen a new *Darkstalkers* game in a long time, so just getting a new version would be sweet enough — but Capcom went a step further by putting this on the PSP. Wireless tournaments? It's just like the old days at the arcade — only you can play anywhere!



Bloodletting Breakdown

These bats show how many rounds each character has won.

Chronicle is a combination of all the past *Darkstalkers* titles, so it's like having the entire series in one portable package!

The background graphics are sharp and crisp, showing off PSP's top-notch 2D capabilities.

As in most *Street Fighter* games, super attacks can be charged up by landing blows.

The game's bizarre cast is a mix of horror legends and classic Capcom character design.

If you set the screen back to the game's original aspect ratio, these bars fill in the extra space on the sides.



DYNASTY WARRIORS



Each of the game's 42 main characters has their own unique strengths, weaknesses and special attacks.

DYNASTY WARRIORS

PERSONALITY
Fun

MADE BY
Koei

WHAT IS THIS?

A tactical action game where you take out your enemies. Then take to the field of battle and fight hundreds of enemies at once.

IS IT BETTER SET
IN A WORLD?

Yes

HOW LONG
Takes

10-15 hours

WHAT'S NEW?

This is a single-player only game

DYNASTY WARRIORS

Massive ass-kicking, with strategy

For the first time ever on a handheld, players can experience the "fight huge crowds of people" action that the Dynasty Warriors series has made popular on PS2 — with a few twists. The new Battlefield Arena system splits the game into shorter chunks, making this version a better fit for pick-up-and-play portable gaming. There are also hundreds of new "Second-in-Command" officers that give bodyguards special skills you control

and, coolest of all, you can swap these officers with other Dynasty Warriors players via Memory Stick.

There are two single-player modes: in Mosou you select one of 42 characters and battle through five stages; in Free mode, you select a specific scenario to battle in.

Based on the novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, the Dynasty Warriors series has sold over seven million copies. If you haven't tried it yet, now is a great time to see what all the hubbub is about.

Don't Forget Your Brain!

Dynasty Warriors may look like an all-out, button-crashing fight fest, but there's also a deep strategy element to the game. You actually control whole armies, and which battles you choose to fight — with which supporting officers — can be just as important as how many enemy troops you can single-handedly take down.



You know the action is fierce when you're piling up combos upwards of 49 kills.





While the graphics don't quite compare to the PlayStation 2 *Dynasty Warriors* games, this is still a pretty good first effort for a handheld system. The screen almost always stays loaded with enemy soldiers, maintaining that constant feel of danger that's made the past games such classics.



Army Battlin' Breakdown

This is the status of your general (the character you play as). There are 42 of them to choose from.

The console versions of *Dynasty Warriors* show more enemies on screen at once, but you still see quite a few on PSP.

The overall strength of your forces is shown here, next to your enemy's current status.

You get more experience for fencer moves and combos, which will in turn boost your level and make you a more powerful fighter.

This is the status of the guy that you're currently attacking. Beat on him and watch the bar drop down!

The game map has been divided into smaller chunks than usual, making for a much faster pace.



FIFA SOCCER



These players look amazing considering that they're the size of ants during normal play view.

FIFA SOCCER

PUBLISHED BY Electronic Arts
MADE BY EA GAMES

WHAT IS THIS?
The world's best-selling series for the world's most played sport, football, what else do you need to know?

IT COMES OUT IN
Months

IT'S OUT THERE
Everywhere

MULTIPLAYER
Go for two-player versus, online, or party play with up to four busy fans with mini-games that are just as fun.

FIFA SOCCER

The world's top sport, in your hand

EA Sports looks to bring "The Beautiful Game" to PSP, complete with a Season mode, Challenges mode, Tournaments, Mid-Season Scenario mode, and more. In Challenges mode, you replay famous games, fighting your way out of preset match situations. With Mid-Season Scenario, you can play out the rest of the 2004/2005 season with current real-time standings.

Two players can take to the pitch to compete in wireless head-to-head matches, or up to four players can compete in a special

mode using only one PSP.

Jam-packed with more than 350 official team and league licenses, FIFA is about as authentic as a sports game can get. The developer has also included EA Pocket Tracks, popular music and videos that you can listen to and watch while taking a break from the game. Finally, it must be said that the PSP's widescreen display is perfect for viewing the action on a soccer field, making the handheld a footy fan's new best friend.



Jump into the middle of the 2004/2005 season and take your team to the championships!

Authenticity is the Key

Bowling more than 350 official team and league licenses, FIFA Soccer is your game no matter who you enjoy pulling for. Just power up the PSP, put on your dream jersey and live out those championship fantasies. With so many different modes to choose from — including a full season — you'll press a nice, big crater into your couch cushion.





As you can see from these screens, in FIFA, soccer matches will take place in various different weather conditions. We've seen sunny days, overcast days and rainy days so far. No matter how wet the soccer pitch might get though, the matches never get called off on PSP.



Fine Footy Breakdown

With Season play, Mid-Season Scenario mode, custom tournaments and more, you'll give these fans plenty to cheer about.

What this guy's trying to tell you is that you can listen to all of the game's music tracks from the PSP's front end.

This shot was taken from the game's replay mode — yep, it's in there, and it's always fun to fool around with.



What could be more fun (for a soccer fan, of course) than re-living classic matches with fellow footy fans?

This game is pretty. Nice visual touches — like these real-time shadows — really add a lot.

With over 350 official team and league licenses, you should be able to play as any top soccer star.

GRETZKY NHL



By basing Gretzky's actual NHL records in Challenge mode, you can unlock jerseys, teams, and playable Gretzkys from different points in his career.

GRETZKY NHL

PUBLISHED BY
Sony GEA

MADE BY
Pope 44 Studios

WHAT IS THIS?

Turn only shot at scoring any NHL, with a fully licensed, Gretzky in the first hockey game for PSP, with many other and play modes to pick from.

IT COMES OUT

In Spring
Everyone

WHAT'S NEW?

Realistic-looking wireless connection, plus full online play!

GRETZKY NHL

The "Great One" returns... on PSP!

Bummed out because the NHL season was cancelled? Maybe your PSP can help soften the blow with Sony's Gretzky NHL. Still sad? Well, what if we told you that this game not only has two-player wireless multiplayer, but can also be played against other hockey fans online? See, we knew we could get you to smile.

Gretzky packs in all 30 NHL teams with all of the real players and arenas. Plus, 400 of the AHL's top players are included for you to

put on a NHL team. If you're playing by yourself, the Quick Game, Exhibition and Season modes will provide your Hockey fix. In Season mode you can assume the role of a GM and draft, sign or trade players; play a regular 82-game season, advance to the playoffs and aim for the Stanley Cup.

There's also the Gretzky Challenge mode, where breaking "The Great One's" records will unlock extra goodies. Face it, with no hockey on TV, you need this game.

A Lot to Live Up To

Any game with "The Great One" on the box had better play some damn good hockey, right? Sony is hoping to take the sport to new heights with Gretzky NHL's long list of features, including a new shot aiming option, on-the-fly play calling, stop shot meter, wicked one-timers and more. And hey, online play ain't bad, either.



Although the NHL used to frown upon fights being put into its games, fist-buffs appear in full force in Gretzky.





Whether you're a hardcore hockey fan or you only catch a game every now and then, you should definitely have heard of Wayne Gretzky. Hopefully, Gretzky NHL will appeal to as wide of an audience, much like EA's classic NHL games did back on the Sega Genesis way back when.



Penalty Box Breakdown

All 30 of the NHL's teams and their players are in Gretzky NHL, including The Great One himself.

Game info, such as the remaining time, period and score, are kept cleanly out of the way in this top bar.

Wireless two-player is included, and you can also go online to play buddies across the country.

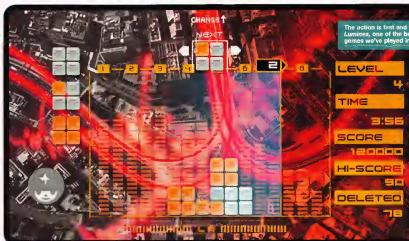


The game's many modes include Season mode, Quick Game, Exhibition, and Gretzky Challenge.

Every NHL team's real arena is included in the game, so you can live out your sports fantasies to their fullest.

Not only is every NHL player included, but you can also choose to add roughly 400 AHL players to any team.

LUMINES



The action is fast and frantic in Lumines, one of the best puzzle games we've played in a long time.

LUMINES

DEVELOPED BY:
Ubisoft

GRADE BY:
Q Entertainment

WHAT IS THIS?
A fast and frantic puzzle game that combines the Tetris formula with new personality traits, and adds in cool bonus music and tricky visuals.

BE COMING OUT
to Much

EVERYONE
Everyone

WORTH THE
Wait? Not
to be

LUMINES

Listen up, hardcore puzzle fans!

Hardcore gamers will want to know that this trippy mix of trance music and block-dropping puzzle action was produced by Tetsuya Mizuguchi, the genius behind Sega Rally, Space Channel 5 and Rez.

As in Tetris, blocks fall from the top of the screen, and it's game over if they pile up to the top. However, instead of fitting blocks of different shapes together, you're more worried about their color mix. A bar moves across the screen to

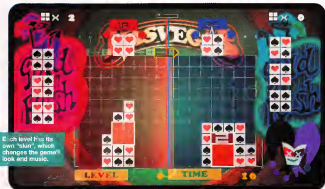
the speed of the music, clearing away any color pairs you've made. The more pairs you can set up to be cleared in one pass, the higher your combo bonus points.

By surviving in the single-player mode, you'll unlock new "skins", which change the background image, block graphics and music. There's also a fun, frantic two-player wireless battle mode.

If you like puzzle games — and thrive on intense pressure — then you've got to check out Lumines.

Tough to Explain

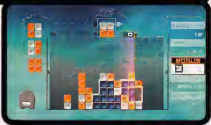
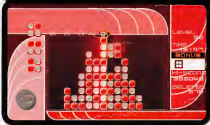
The Lumines gameplay is a tough thing to put into words, but it should only take you a couple of minutes to pick up the basics once it's in your hands. You can play it like Tetris at first and have some success, but you'll quickly learn that you have to approach this puzzle much differently if you want to get far into the game.



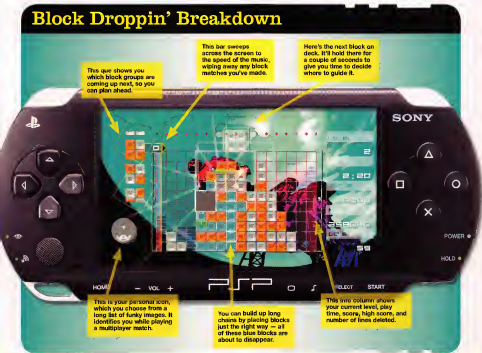
Each level has its own "skin", which changes the game's look and music.



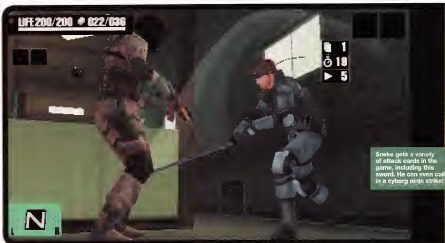
Each of these screens may look totally different, but the exact same gameplay is going on in each one. The game's different "skins" — combinations of new background images, block graphics and music — help to keep the action fresh as you play through level after level.



Block Droppin' Breakdown



METAL GEAR AC!D



Sneak gets a variety of attack cards in the game, including this sword. He can even call in a cyborg ninja strike!

METAL GEAR AC!D

RECOMMENDED
Korean Digital
Ent. America

WEEK 49
Korean Computer
Ent. Japan

WHAT IS THIS?
The same Metal
Gear-type story
and action you
love, only here,
Snake... and with
card decks.

IS IT ANY GOOD?
In terms of
the story.

WHAT'S NEW?
A brand new
card game.

WORTH PLAYING?
Without two-
player head-
to-head.

METAL GEAR AC!D

The series takes a fresh new turn

Part card battle game, part turn-based strategy, *AC!D* is a new type of Metal Gear featuring an original Solid Snake story from the same people that made Metal Gear Solid for the Game Boy Color years ago.

To get a better idea of how this game plays, imagine a standard military base that Snake would typically infiltrate in past games. Your job is still to get Snake through the area to his mission objective using stealth, killing guards

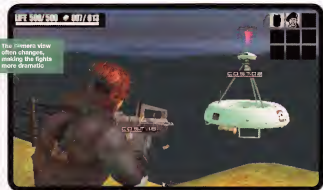
only when necessary, while picking up items and weapons scattered around the area. Sounds like any other Metal Gear game, right?

Now picture this as a turn-based game, where Snake and the bad guys take turns performing their actions. Snake's available attacks and maneuvers depend on which cards he has in his deck (there are 200 in all). Getting the picture?

Sweetening the deal, a new two-player battle mode has been added to the U.S. release.

Is This Really Metal Gear?

Longtime fans of the series might understandably have some reservations about this new style of Metal Gear. If you're not a strategy fan the gap might be too big to bridge, but rest assured that *AC!D* still really feels like a Metal Gear title. Except... the story seems even more trippy than usual. *Marionettes... creepy.*



The camera view often changes, making the fights more dramatic.



Evan if it isn't what we're used to, how cool is it to have a Metal Gear game at a system's launch? This is the first time it's ever happened, so we're betting that most fans will give it a try. Just seeing a fully 3D Snake run around in the palm of your hand is plenty reason enough to play.



俺は現役を退いて久しい。

Sneaky Snake Breakdown

Most of your vital info is shown up in this corner, such as life, the alert timer (if you've been spotted), and certain equipped items like body armor.

This menu appears over every character, showing stuff like the number of cards currently available and a character's turn order.

The environments are nice to look at, and have the same visual style of previous Metal Gear titles.



No matter how you position the camera, this compass will keep you pointed in the right direction.

Enemy guards seem to be just as clever (and occasionally stupid) as ever. You'll have to play smart to have a chance at beating the game.

You can use lots of different weapons including grenades, which the guards really, really hate.

MLB



Every Major League team and player come packed into 2011's revamped baseball title for PSP.

MLB

DEVELOPED BY
Sony SCA
MADE BY
PSP Sports

WHAT IS THIS?
This season version of Sony's own baseball series introduced a new series and a new way of thinking.

IT GAMES OUT
In 2011, it's the new baseball season.

TEAM LISTING
Every team.

WHAT'S NEW
Wireless two-player head-to-head action.

MLB

A short name for a big game

The first thing you need to know about MLB is that it's online. With a wireless router, you can play baseball against anyone, anywhere in the country. Or, you can simply play head-to-head offline against a friend.

In single-player mode, you can play a quick game or go through a full regular season, advance to the playoffs and (hopefully) be crowned World Series Champion. MLB introduces a new type of pitcher/batter interface that aims

for a better bonding of a player's attribute rating and the game's skill. Now, if you make several mistakes pitching, it will impact your hurler's confidence level and make it harder to paint the corners of the strike zone. Fielding has also been overhauled in this version, with a system that puts more pressure on the gamer to make the catch.

Other details — such as transitions between animations, broken bats, wild pitches, and check swings — make this one to watch.

In With The New

PSP Sports is serious about establishing MLB as the premier way to play baseball on PSP, so they're packing in plenty of new features. As with the Confidence Meter and Fielding Metrics, most new additions are geared towards putting the focus on a player's skill, and not just his players' attributes.



MLB will go head-to-head against EA's MVP Baseball only. MLB features online play.





Sony's PSP Sports games have had their ups and downs over the years — most recently, they've been down. But it seems like they're putting their all into re-establishing themselves for the next generation of portable gamers. It'll be interesting to see MLB slug it out with EA's Baseball 10.



Batter's Box Breakdown

Using a wireless router, flick this switch on and you can go online to play across the country!

If a pitcher isn't performing well, his confidence will go down and he could end up in a slump.

Yes, sports fans, the real stadiums are all packed into this powerful portable package.



The game's new "Branch Point Technology" lets you field the ball and pre-load a throw with seamless fielding transitions.

MLB is packed with authentic details like wild pitches, broken bats, bunts and check swings.

MLB's brand-new "Playmaker Fielding Marker" system puts more of a focus on a gamer's skill.

MVP BASEBALL



Two game's Pure Swing System promises to make batting more fun than ever.

MVP BASEBALL

PUBLISHED BY
Electronic Arts
MADE BY
EA GAMES

WHAT IS THIS?
The first PSP baseball game from Electronic Arts, the overall king of sports video games.

IT COMES OUT
in March

CARD RATING
Everyone

UNIQUEPLAYERS
Wireless two-player head-to-head, plus up to four people can play solo games on just one PSP

MVP BASEBALL

EA takes the field in a big way

The bleacher bums at EA Sports are looking to bring their take on the American Pastime to PSP in a big way. Featuring their Pure Swing system, MVP Baseball will take the field around the PSP launch, just in time for the start of the '05 season.

EA promises unprecedented control over the fundamentals of hitting, pitching and base running. The game features several different play modes, highlighted by the fully featured Season mode in which you can take your favorite team from opening day to the

World Series. Using the PSP's multiplayer function, two players can compete in several different play modes including Homerun Shootout, Pitcher Showdown or a simple exhibition game. Also, up to four players can party play on just one PSP in different batting and pitching mini-games.

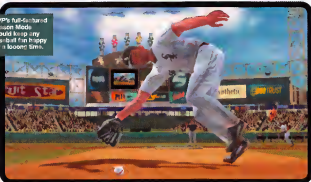
Rounding out MVP's solid list of features, you'll also be able to listen to music from the game, and watch music videos, while taking a break from the action. It's extra nice to be a PSP owner if you're into sports games, isn't it?

Get Together
Your Team

No, not your Major League Baseball team, although you'll be needing those guys around, too. We're talking about your team of gamers, your baseball-lovin' pals that want in on some multiplayer action. MVP Baseball has something for the party whether you're playing one-on-one in two-player mode, or tackling various mini-games with four friends.



MVP's full-featured Season Mode should keep any baseball fan happy for a long time.





This game looks pretty darn nice in these shots. Whether the view is zoomed in for a close look at an individual play, or pulled out to show the entire outfield, this game looks and moves like real baseball. We got shivers just thinking about wireless two-player pitcher/batter duels.



Bench Warming Breakdown

The infield diagram helps you keep track of a player's status at each of the bases.

Important game information, like the score, inning and strike/ball count, are kept up here.

See if you can knock it out of the park in every team's real MLB stadium.

Using this pitcher's interface, you can choose your type of pitch and keep an eye on your hurler's stamina.

The red and blue squares mark the hot spots and cold spots of each particular pitcher.

Just about every Major League player is packed in here, so you can root for all of your favorites.



NBA 2005



The PSP's wide screen is perfect for basketball, but you get to see perimeter players that are usually cut off.

NBA 2005

DEVELOPER: EA
EA GAMES

MODES: 11
11 Sports

WHAT TO EXPECT
The first time you see the NBA 2005 logo, you can't help but smile. In the classic, you can get to realize the NBA action on a handheld.

IT COMES OUT
in Spring

EA GAMES
EA GAMES

WIRELESS
Wireless two-player action
— you can see each other play online.

NBA 2005

PSP's first (and only) hoops sim

From Sony comes the first real basketball simulation ever for a handheld gaming system. Packed with a full list of NBA teams and rosters, NBA 2005 also jams in an all-new Practice mode, Play Off mode, and a Full Season mode with simulation, trades, free agent lists, and injuries. Got your attention yet, hoops fans?

There are several options for wireless two-player action — you can go head-to-head in an exhibition game or compete in

mini-games such as the classic 3-Point Challenge, the 999 Sports Skills Challenge (similar to an All-Star type competition), and Paint mode, where gamers compete in a color-the-court challenge. And, you can even play online!

Rounding out the package is the "Clutch" Shooting Mechanism, where a gamer's timing, along with their ability to pull off spin moves, jukes, and other special maneuvers, will determine if the shot goes in or clanks off the rim.

PSP's Got Game!

If you're a basketball fan stuck on an airplane, bus or train, what could be better than playing a little hoops action on your PSP? With the power of this new handheld, we're finally able to play modern-day sports games away from our living rooms. My friends, we truly are living in a wondrous new age.



Shaq goes strong to the hole while an army of Agents Smoove look on.





Every NBA team and every NBA player is packed into *NBA 2006*. And with the Season mode, you can keep the action going over several trips, vacations, and lunch breaks. Of course, you'll probably end up playing straight through on your couch every night. Hey, who could blame you?



Rim Rockin' Breakdown

The crowd is one area that leaves room for improvement in future versions. Not bad for a launch game, though.

With the game's "Clutch Shooting Mechanism", more emphasis is put on the gamer's own timing and skill.

Background detail, like this entrance way and the ad billboards, make the game feel more real.

Live graphic touches, like these light and player reflections on the court, add to the realism.

The animations are a lot more lifelike than anything we've seen on Game Boy. Sorry if we keep gushing, but PSP really is that amazing!

The TV-style presentation is made even better by the extra view afforded by the PSP's wide screen.

NBA STREET SHOWDOWN



Much of the action takes place in the air above the court in EA's NBA Street Showdown.

NBA STREET SHOWDOWN

Full-Speed 3D
Basketball Action
Made by
EA Canada

WHAT IS THIS?
Three-on-three arcade-style basketball that doesn't follow NBA rules, or the rules of gravity, for that matter.

IT COMES OUT IN
March

HOW MANY
Players

DETAILS:
Wireless two-player local, also online, up to four players can play mini-games using one PSP.

NBA STREET SHOWDOWN

PSP just learned how to trash-talk

Awww, yeah! NBA Street Showdown has been one of the hottest PSP titles since we in the press got our first peek, and it just keeps looking better. Its arcade-style, pick-up-and-play hoops action should make for a must-have handheld game.

Fans of the series on PS2 might like to know that it plays closest to NBA Street Vol. 2, with a few touches from NBA Street V3. Players can take on the NBA stars in a quick 3-on-3 game, then work

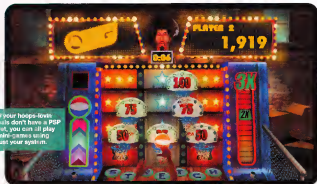
towards becoming a street legend in King of the Court mode — you can even create your own baller to play against the greats.

Players can also take on Shot Blocker and Arcade Shootout modes, or play a wireless exhibition game against a friend.

Last but not least, as in every EA Sports PSP game, four gamers can compete in party play using just one PSP (this works with both Shot Blocker and Arcade Shootout modes). Have mercy.

Takin' it to the Street

So, just what does NBA Street Showdown do that's different from normal NBA action? Well, for starters, the games are just three-on-three, there are no fouls, no shot blocking violations, and the dunks often fly up higher than the backboard. You can put together three-man teams from any NBA ball club, or go old-school with NBA legends.



If your hoops-love pulse doesn't have a PSP yet, you can still play mini-games using just your system.



NBA purists might prefer the more realistic simulation hoops in 999 Sports' *NBA 2005*, but if it's high-flying arcade-style action you're looking for, then buddy, you just found it. *NBA Street Showdown* could quickly become one of PSP's hottest head-to-head multiplayer games at launch.



Blacktop Breakdown

By pulling off lots of different tricks, you build up special Gamebreaker moves worth more points.

The dunks in this game range from "Dance" to "DAAAAMMMN!"

The PSP's wide screen really helps hoop games, giving you a fuller view of the court at all times.

Although the action on the court is over the top, the game uses real NBA teams and players.

Ditching official NBA rules, shot blocking is allowed — herson just ain't high enough to sweat it.

There are lots of different areas to play on, from real-world street courts to fantasy play parks.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS



The game's oversaturated, neon colors go perfectly with the underground racing scene.

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS

Developed by Electronic Arts

Rated by EA Games

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

Rated by ESRB

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NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND RIVALS

PS2's top racing series goes PSP!

This zillion-selling series is putting the pedal to the metal. This latest game in the hit franchise feels faster than ever before, which could just make it the best NFSU title yet.

Rivals squeezes in eight exclusive game modes like Drift Attack, Nitrous Run, Rally Relay, and Car Spec, so longtime fans have plenty of new things to look forward to. Car buffs can customize up to 20 high-performance Japanese and American cars to race on ten

brand-new circuit tracks, each of which is designed to add a unique visual flavor to the mix.

Of course, what would a PSP racing game be without wireless head-to-head competition, right? It's in there, along with party play that lets you compete against three other players using just one system. Rivals also comes with EA's Pocket Trax feature, which lets you listen to music and watch videos of the game's hottest tunes. That's a lot under the hood!

Pimp Your Ride

Car modding is *the* very heart of the *Need For Speed* Underground series, and it's here in a big way on PSP's *Rivals*. By upgrading your engine, chassis, tires, turbo charger and more, you can improve your car's top speed, handling and acceleration. You can also customize your car's look with paint jobs and sweeter rims. Trick it out!



Maybe it's just us, but *Rivals* feels faster than its console cousins, which can only be a good thing.



This game is a car modder's dream. As you trick out your ride, you can take it for a spin in eight exclusive new race modes including Drift Attack, Nitrous Run, Rally Relay, and Car Spec. Or, y'know, you could just goof around in the garage, repainting your car and adding more parts.



Rubber Burnin' Breakdown

Some challenges are timed, so you'll often have to take risks to keep up with the clock.

In this mode, passing through each gate rewards you with a little more time to keep going.

Important info is shown here, such as how close you are to completing the challenge.



NFL STREET 2



Anything goes in EA's Street brand of football — even giant stick chases

NFL STREET 2

Published by Electronic Arts
Made by EA GAMES

WHAT IS THIS?

Throw the NFL rule book out the window and prepare yourselves for the wildest in this arcade-style football game.

IT COMES OUT IN MARCH

EA GAMES Everywhere

MULTIPLAYER

Whether two-player head-to-head, or up to four players can play online across the net.

NFL STREET 2

Crazy arcade action, Street style!

EA's first portable version of its arcade-style pigskin game comes packed with exclusive Street events that you won't find in any other version, like Street Sialom, Style Standoff, and Style Point Challenge. Plus, up to four people can party play on a single PSP in modes like 2 Minute Challenge, Jump Ball Challenge, and more. Or, if you've got a buddy who's sprung for his own PSP, you can play against him wirelessly in multiplayer mode.

Crazy NFL Street moves like

off-the-wall catches, wall hurdles, and wall end zone dives are all here — you can even open up throwing lanes with up-the-wall passes! Show off some style with no-look, one-handed grabs, or celebrate with one hand as you're pulling down a touchdown catch with the other. Go nuts!

Loaded with current NFL stars as well as NFL legends, Street 2 should easily be the best handheld football game ever made — at least, until Madden eventually takes the field on PSP.

Of the Wall Football

In NFL Street 2, kicking 7-4 the sidelines doesn't mean that you're trying to duck out of bounds. Since gravity isn't much of an issue in "Video Game World", your players can run on walls to hurdle over defenders, or wall-dive into the end zone. They can even create open throwing lanes with up-the-wall passes. Hey, who needs the real world?



The PSP's wide screen shows a great look at the fun of the game.

PRESS > 
TURBO



EA's Street games are perfect for the PSP. They're usually easier to pick up and play in short bursts than full-on sports sims, and the smaller teams mean that you can zoom in a little for a closer view. They're also perfect multiplayer games — go for the big play and trash talk your pals!



Smash Mouth Breakdown



RENGOKU: THE TOWER OF PURGATORY



Gun head, giant crushing arm — functionality takes priority over fashion in Rengoku.

RENGOKU: THE TOWER OF PURGATORY

CREATED BY
Squid Digital
Entertainment
Merits

MADE BY
Medias 9.0

WHAT IS IT? A dark, gritty sci-fi action game with a sci-fi feel, the game is an end-of-the-world in a post-apocalyptic setting.

IT COMES ON
Sometime this year

ESB RATING
It hasn't been determined yet

NOTES
It's a post-apocalyptic sci-fi game

RENGOKU: THE TOWER OF PURGATORY

Build the perfect killing machine

Rengoku: The Tower of Purgatory is a unique mix of Eastern and Western sci-fi/fantasy. In this third-person action game, you control a well-armed battle android that must fight to the top of a great tower and confront a mysterious foe. Along the way, players can improve their android's skills and acquire new weapons and technologies for each part of its body. Every change alters your android's appearance, allowing for a lot of customization.

To make it through the game's eight massive levels, you'll have to manage your resources between current missions and long-term goals. Every stage is randomly generated, so it's different each time you play. Four-player deathmatch is also included, and you can wirelessly swap equipment between PSPs.

Sci-fi fans might be interested to know that Japanese illustrator Jun Suemi is responsible for the game's dark, gritty look.

Expect the Unexpected

One of the key features of Rengoku is that every level of the tower is randomly generated — that is, the game makes it up on the spot, meaning that you'll never play the exact same level twice. You'll have to keep this in mind while upgrading your android, so that you can be sure to stay prepared for whatever surprises may lie ahead.



That's what they get for charging at a battle android with a gun for a head.



For an action game, there's a good amount of strategy to figure out. For example, see those head, torso, leg and hand icons in the bottom-left corner of most of these screens? You can upgrade each part separately with different weapons, and the combinations are a big key to victory.



Awesome Android Breakdown

Aside from the weapon customization, the action is pretty straightforward — all you need is this standard life bar.

With the right weaponry, you can make very big boom-booms.

This compass will help you keep your bearings in the game's randomly generated levels.

Each body part of your android can be upgraded, allowing for tons of different combinations.

You'll face a wide variety of enemies, and you'll need to find the best weapons for each.

Your android starts the game with no weapons, no items, nothing — it's up to you to get him ready for combat.

RIDGE RACER



Drifting through a turn is pure heaven — HEAVEN! Pick a "dynamic" drift car and slide everywhere!

RIDGE RACER

PUBLISHED BY
Namco Bandai
MADE BY
Namco Ltd.

WHAT IS THIS?
Targem arcade racer with controls, but mostly fun, 24 new tracks, 58 cars, and a new drift system, which you'll need to know on the game's incredibly wide-ranged tracks.

IT COMES OUT
to March

EVERY RATING
begins

MATCHUP
Like players
call race
winningly

RIDGE RACER

One of the best arcade racers ever!

We could list off the 58 cars, eight-player wireless races and 24 courses, but all you really need to know about this game is that it's damn fun.

Think of this as a "greatest hits" Ridge Racer title. All of the tracks come from past games in the series, including both console games and arcade hits like Ridge Racer.

The 24 track count does include variations of some courses, and reverse versions of each normal track, but there's still way

more course variety here than in any other Ridge Racer title to date.

The series' classic drift control, plus cool new touches like nitro, make this one of the best arcade-style racers we've ever played. It's probably the best Ridge Racer ever, which is really saying something. It's also probably the prettiest PSP launch game, with colorful, hyper-detailed tracks that fly by with silky-smooth animation. If you're looking for that one game to "wow" your pals with, this is it.

Easy on the Eyes

If Ridge Racer isn't the prettiest PSP game at launch, we'd love to see the game that tops it. With super-detailed course environments and gorgeous cars, you'd better be ready to catch your jaw when it drops. The game also runs at a consistently smooth framerate, so it feels oh-so-nice while drifting around turns.



Nitro boosts are a great new addition to the Ridge Racer series, and add a bit of new strategy.





We'll never forget turning on our PSPs for the first time and seeing the glory that is Ridge Racer — even the intro movie rocks! Yes, we know that everyone loves other racing series like *Need For Speed Underground*, and for good reason — but you absolutely have to take this game for a spin.



Nitro Driftin' Breakdown

You race against 11 other cars in single-player, and up to seven opponents in wireless multiplayer.

The backgrounds are gorgeous to look at, but it's a better idea to keep both of your eyes on the road.

The map only shows markers for your car and the current leader, so you can see how much ground you have to make up at a glance.

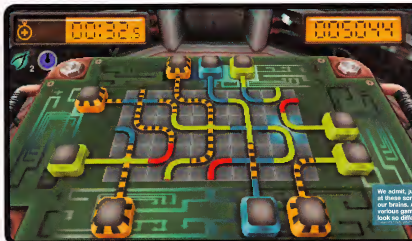


This is the first Ridge Racer with nitro boosts. You earn them by drifting — as fast and as long as possible — through turns.

You can race in either first- or third-person, but how could you not want to look at this beauty?

This game is packed with cool little details — the speedometer is even different for each and every car.

SMART BOMB



We admit, just looking at these screens hurts our brains. All of the various game boards look no different.

SMART BOMB

Developed by
Brite

Made by
Core Design

What is Smart
Bomb?

A bomb, third
bomb-diffusing
puzzle game with
a story, from
— of all people —
the creators of
Tomb Raider

It comes out
to March

Game status

This game isn't
even rated yet

Multiplayer

Up to two-player
wireless head-
to-head

SMART BOMB

Explosive bomb-diffusing action

An original title from Core Design, the development house that brought us *Tomb Raider*, *Smart Bomb* is a fast, tense 3D puzzle game based around diffusing sophisticated AI bombs. Single-player action includes Story, Arcade and Challenge modes, while up to four players can wirelessly compete head-to-head in multiplayer mode.

Describing a puzzle game is tough, but here goes: gamers are faced with a series of bomb

modules split into tiers, and each tier must be disabled to unlock the next. The goal is to move closer to the defonator at the core of a bomb so it can be deactivated.

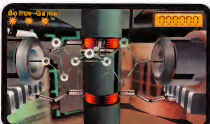
In the Story Mode, you play the role of a B.D.U. (Bomb Disposal Unit) member. You must train with the team's leader, then disarm a network of intelligent bombs which threaten the world. The team's former commander went missing just before the bombs appeared, so there's a mystery to be solved, too.

PSP Puzzle Paradise

With Eidon's *Smart Bomb*, Ubisoft's *Lumines* and Ignition's *Archer Maclean's Mercury*, the PSP already has a fantastic selection of puzzle games to pick from right at the system's launch. There are even more of them out in Japan, such as Sega's *Puyo Puyo Fever*, which could soon make their way over here.



The bomb there is started throughout, like with these mirrors used to redirect lasers.



Creaks, belts, gears, lasers, mirrors, fuses — these AI bombs are made up of everything but the kitchen sink! (And we're not totally sure that isn't in there somewhere, too.) PSP owners across the country are sure to be scratching their heads with this one — which is what puzzle gamers love.



Explosive Breakdown

The clock is your worst enemy in this game — with the timer ticking, you're bound to lose your cool!

For a puzzle game, there's a lot of backstory to make the game even more interesting.

Although disarming the bombs and clearing each stage is the main goal, you'll also want to aim for a high score.

There is a wide variety of game boards to play through, each made up of several types of traps and other dangers.

The bombs are split into several tiers, each of which must be cleared to reach and disarm the core.

There are over a hundred different bomb configurations to deactivate, giving this puzzler long legs.

SPIDER-MAN 2



Don't worry, you didn't miss a big future fight scene when you want to get popcorn — the action in this game goes beyond the movie.

SPIDER-MAN 2

PUBLISHED BY
Activision
MADE BY
Vicarious Visions

WHAT TO EXPECT
As Spider-Man, you get to climb walls, spin webs, swing around New York and beat up on crooks and supervillains in this movie-based action game.

IT COMES OUT
in March

EVERYwhere

ADDITIONAL INFO
This game is single-player only.

SPIDER-MAN 2

On your friendly neighborhood PSP

The Spider-Man 2 monitor may seem a little dated by now, but don't mistake this for a rehash of an old game. This brand-new Spidey adventure has been created exclusively for the PSP, and greatly expands on what you saw in the movie.

Along with the web-head's Hollywood co-star Doc Ock, you'll also get to lay the smack down on other classic villains like the Vulture, Mysterio, Rhino, and Shocker in 19 new levels. The

gameplay isn't as free-roaming as in Spider-Man 2 for the PS2, but this isn't your typical 2D handheld side-scroller, either. The PSP game actually plays more like the earlier level-based Spidey titles that debuted back on the PSone, with action that's every bit as 3D as its current console counterparts.

Finally, Spidey's long list of moves include wall crawling, web swinging, web yanking, capture webbing, heavy web ball and web cocoon (Eir, "web yanking"...?).

Do Whatever a Spider Can

Post Spider-Man games for handheld systems were limited to old-school 2D graphics, but that's all changed thanks to the PSP. This Spidey game will include the free-roaming, free-swinging style of recent console titles, with just one major difference — you won't be able to swing from the rooftops down to the streets.

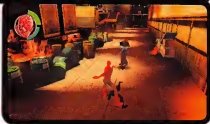


Could there be a more classic shot of the web-head in action than this?





There are many different play modes in Spider-Man 2 — you can go web-swinging, play some side-on missions, or fight thugs in 3D street-level areas. The latter type makes up most of the action in the game, featuring more attacks and maneuvers than any other play mode.



Web-Slingin' Breakdown

There's not a lot of stuff cluttering up the screen in this game; basically just Spidey's life meter.

Those green and red triangles above the bad guys' heads are actually their life meters — a very useful addition.

The environments are fully 3D, unlike all of the past Spider-Man handheld games.

Uh... who the hell are these guys? That's a cool point about this game, actually — there's more to it than what you saw in the movie.

The lighting effects and explosions look nice, and Spidey even gets his own real-time shadow.

The web-crawler has a long list of attacks, plus he can use his webs to tie up a villain or yank them over.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX



There are 13 total levels, including exclusive PSP stages in Las Vegas, Atlanta, Kyoto and Santa Cruz.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

FOURTEEN OF
the greatest
skateboarding
games

WORTH TO TRY?
The PSP version of the greatest, most feature-packed O.G. in gaming's all-time top skating series — with exclusive new "Remix" levels to try.

IT COMES OUT
in Spring
2006

MULTIPLAYER
Play up to three friends in one to different exclusive multiplayer modes.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2 REMIX

Maximum multiplayer mayhem!

Tackle Tony's World Destruction Tour on the go with 13 single-player levels, including four brand-new cities: Las Vegas, Atlanta, Kyoto and Santa Cruz. Each city is loaded with crazy goals, line-changing level events, and unlockable characters including Ben Franklin, Jesse James and 25 others.

Players can put themselves into the game by importing a photo of themselves from a PC. Gamers can also create custom graffiti

tags, skate parks, decks, tricks, and goals. Coolest of all, four people can compete in a whopping 10 different wireless mini-games with ruffly titles like Combo Mambo, SLAP, and Scavenger Hunt.

Finally, in case you're wondering, the "Remix" in the title refers to the remixed THUG 2 levels in Classic mode. You can also compete against a timer in classic Tony Hawk modes like "C-O-M-B-O", "Secret Tape" and "High Score." That's a lot of stuff in one game!

Time to Get Creative

If you're the creative type, you'll have plenty to get excited about in THUG 2 Remix. You can make your own graffiti tags, your own skater, skate parks, decks, tricks, goals, and levels of difficulty. You can even take a photo of your face and put it onto your custom skater, using the PSP's USB connection to a PC. Then, play your "game self" against your buddy's!



Just like the console versions of THUG 2, there are more ways than ever to string together long combos.





This latest game in the Tony Hawk series is easily the nuttiest so far. You can ditch your deck to ride a wide variety of vehicles, including motorized scooters, hot dog stands and hospital gurneys. You can also play as odd characters like Bun Franklin, and pelt bystanders with tomatoes.



Board Grinding Breakdown

By completing big moves and combos, you build up more advanced special moves.

There are 25 different skaters to choose from, or even cooler, you can make your own.

The game's 13 levels include four brand-new cities: Las Vegas, Atlanta, Kyoto and Santa Cruz.



Just imagine this screen packed with four players in wireless competition!

The moves in your current combo are listed here — but if you fall, none of them count.

There are more types of ramps and objects to trick off of than in any other skateboarding game, ever.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR



Can you believe that this is a handheld game? Take your PSP, pop in Tiger Woods and kick back for a slow, relaxing game's Sunday afternoon.

TIGER WOODS
PGA TOURDEVELOPED BY
Electronic ArtsMADE BY
EA GAMES

WHAT IS THIS? EA's top game series comes to PSP, bringing with it the classic Tiger personality and a host of new features.

IT COMES OUT in March.

TEEN RATING: Everyone.

MULTIPLAYER: Wireless two-player match-play mode. Also up to four players can compete in mini-games using just one PSP.

TIGER WOODS
PGA TOUR

Tee off with gaming's top golf series

Gaming's top golf series tees off on the PSP with the same sweet Tiger gameplay you've come to love on PS2. Sony's *Hot Shots* is an amazing game, but if you're a serious golf fan and want to play on the most realistic greens possible, this is the game for you.

Players can create their own custom golfer and upgrade his skills in Career mode, while taking on all-time greats like Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Vijay Singh, and Tiger himself in tourna-

ments and special challenges. The game's 12 highly detailed courses include Pebble Beach, Harbor Town, Paradise Cove, Sherwood Country Club and more. There are five different wireless multiplayer game modes, including the all new Bingo Bango Bongo. Or, up to four people can play on just one PSP in various other game modes.

Tiger's new features, in addition to the lengthy Career mode, should make the PSP a must-have for serious golf fans.

Do it
Yourself

Instead of playing as other golfing greats, why not create the next links legend? On home systems, the Tiger Woods series has set a new standard for detailed character creation, making it possible to make a virtual likeness of pretty much anyone. And — you guessed it — that same great feature is included in the PSP version, too.

PICK YOUR



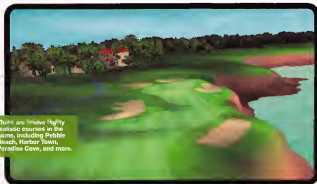
ATTRIBUTE



GAME SELECT



There are twelve highly realistic courses in the game, including Pebble Beach, Harbor Town, Paradise Cove, and more.





Whether you're playing Career mode, Match Play, Tournaments, or going head-to-head against a friend, Tiger Woods PGA Tour will keep any golfing fans entertained. You don't have to be a golf pro to enjoy this game, but players who know their stuff will appreciate the depth and realism.



Birdie Breakdown



TWISTED METAL: HEAD-ON



There's a lot of fire in this game. Pyromaniacs, you're gonna love your new PSP!

TWISTED METAL:
HEAD-ON

PS2
Sony G2A

PS2
Sony G2A, North America

WHAT IS THIS?
Cars shooting at other cars, no, with rockets, machine guns, and more. It's primarily a multiplayer game.

IT COMES OUT
In Spring

HOW MANY
Cars

DISCLAIMER
It's not play-
ing on a handheld, but
you can play online.

TWISTED METAL:
HEAD-ON

The car combat king is back!

Here's a game that could easily end up being a killer app for Sony's new handheld. *Twisted Metal: Head-On* is closely patterned after PSone's *Twisted Metal 2*, which many fans consider to be the high point of the series.

You can't have a TM game without kick-ass multiplayer, right? Well, just imagine this: massive eight-player wireless battles in 12 unworldly arenas, with a whopping 14 different cars to choose from.

Furthermore, each vehicle comes equipped with machine guns, a turbo boost, and a unique special attack, and every battle arena is packed with numerous items of chaos, including rockets, missiles, and more. Drooling yet?

The only thing that could make this title even more appealing would be full online multiplayer, and guess what — it's in there. If you don't check this game out, you need to check your pulse to make sure you're still alive.

Multiplayer
Mayhem

PS2's *Twisted Metal: Head-On* gave car combat fans their first taste of online carnage, but *Head-On* takes it to a whole new level. Just imagine sitting at home, at a Starbucks, or anywhere with a wireless internet connection, while playing TM against people across the country. Or, just call over seven of your buds for offline action.



Look at all this cool stuff going on — can you believe this action takes place on a handheld?





Like the previous Twisted Metal games, Head-On packs a mighty visual punch with smoke-trailing rockets, transparent flame, and jaw-rocking explosions. And, that's not even counting each car's unique super attack. You'll get to use your arsenal to lay waste to 12 different battle arenas.



Metal Bashing Breakdown

Your radar is invaluable — without it, you wouldn't know which cars were chasing you down.

Longtime Twisted fans will recognize most of the vehicles — who could forget Sweet Tooth?

You can easily tell how much life your opponents have by simply looking above them.

Power-ups are scattered around the battlefield; grabbing them first is a key to winning.

The visual effects in this game have never been seen before on a handheld system.

In this area you can quickly check which weapon you currently have armed, your life gauge, and more.



UNTOLD LEGENDS: BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLADE



There are hundreds of weapons and items in the game, or you can just kick ass with spells.

UNTOLD LEGENDS: BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLADE

PUBLISHED BY
Sony Online Ent.

MADE BY
Sony Online Ent.

WHAT IS THIS?
An action-RPG that focuses on hack-'n-slash gameplay with hundreds of weapons, items and spells.

IT COMES OUT IN
March

ESRB RATING
Teen

MULTIPLAYER
Up to four players can work together to kick monsters together.

UNTOLD LEGENDS: BROTHERHOOD OF THE BLADE

Four player hack-'n-slash action

Hack, slash and cast spells in this original Champions of Norrath-style action/RPG, featuring customizable characters, randomly-generated environments, 150 monster types (including bosses), hundreds of items, and 100 diverse levels.

Aven, the last remaining stronghold of good in a world of evil, is in danger. As a dark threat looms and a gathering of unknown forces grows stronger, heroes have been called together to form

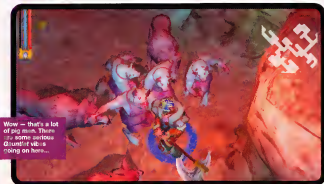
the Brotherhood of the Blade. As a member of the brotherhood, it's your job (along with up to three of your friends) to go out and solve the mystery of this growing peril.

The game lets you create your own character and pick from four different character classes: valiant Knights, brilliant Alchemists, noble Druids, and the feral Widdlings. Each class offers unique fighting abilities or magical spells.

This action/RPG should be the perfect fix for adrenaline addicts.

Always a New Battle

At the heart of Untold Legends is its randomly-generated levels. The structure of each stage, as well as the monsters and items it contains, is created on the fly — so you'll never see the same stage twice, no matter how many times you might play through. Also, the game has hundreds of weapons, items and monsters to keep you surprised with.



Wow — that's a lot of pig man. There are some serious questing videos going on here...



Brotherhood of the Blade is a satisfying single-player game, but it's obvious that it was designed with four players in mind. Since each gamer has their own screen, you can easily split up and explore different directions (that may not be very smart though, depending on what's lurking around).



Beast Bashin' Breakdown

Your character's current remaining life is shown in this corner, along with remaining magic.

Your character stays centered on your screen, while your friends can freely walk off in their own direction.

This game was built for kick-ass multiplayer. Grab three friends and take on hordes of monsters!



There are hundreds of items, usable gear and rare magical artifacts to add to your battle.

There are four character classes to choose from: Knights, Alchemists, Druids and Widdings.

Each and every level is built from scratch every time you play for endless replay value.

WIPEOUT PURE



With titles like *Ridge Racer*, *Need for Speed Underground*, *Alto*, and *Wipeout Pure*, PSP is quickly becoming the place for racing fans.

WIPEOUT PURE

Wipeout Pure is the latest, where the laser cars don't need wheels and you're allowed to float the slow cars out of your way.

Wipeout Pure is the latest, where the laser cars don't need wheels and you're allowed to float the slow cars out of your way.

Wipeout Pure is the latest, where the laser cars don't need wheels and you're allowed to float the slow cars out of your way.

WIPEOUT PURE

Holy \$#!% — this thing is faaaaaast!

The classic PlayStation racing series is looking to make a big comeback on PSP with *Wipeout Pure*. For you newbies, *Wipeout* is all about fast, frantic, futuristic racing with anti-gravity hover cars. Hardcore fans will want to know that *Pure* is being created in the spirit of what's arguably the series' best game, *Wipeout XL*, so it has a very good shot at blowing our doors off.

There are five different speed classes and 16 total circuit tracks,

and gameplay modes include Single Race, Tournament, Time Trial, Free Play and Zone Mode. Players who earn a bronze, silver, or gold trophy will unlock new racing colors, ships, and four classic tracks from past *Wipeout* titles.

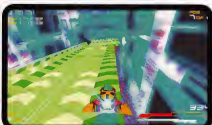
The game supports up to eight players in wireless multiplayer competition, which, y'know, rocks. Cooler still, this is one of the few games offering future downloadable content such as new tracks, vehicles, skins and music. Sweet!

Up, Down, & Sideways

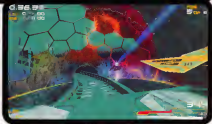
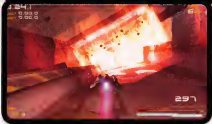
The really cool thing about the racing in *Wipeout* is that it's not bound by the laws of gravity, or even common sense. The tracks are more like roller coaster rides, twisting and turning all over the place at impossible angles. And, on yeh, while you're trying not to fly off the course, your opponents are shooting rockets at you.



In *Wipeout Pure*, your opponents are just as dangerous as the death-defying tracks.



This game holds nothing back — super-fast tracks, incredible explosions and blistering special effects make good use of the PSP's awesome power. Check out that upper-left shot — does that look cool, or what? And can you imagine the sense of speed in first-person (lower right)?



Freakin' Fast Breakdown

The text, billboards and general art design still have that Designer's Republic style from the first game.

Just imagine how much cooler NASCAR would be if the cars shot rockets at each other.

Up to eight people can race against each other in Pure's wireless multiplayer mode. Egads.

Handling differs greatly between the different Wipeout games — will cars scrape off these rails, or come to a dead stop?

Just when you think this game is too fast, you realize that there are four Higher speed settings.

The computer-controlled racers won't take missiles up the tailpipe without firing off a few of their own.

WORLD TOUR SOCCER



The graphics are detailed right down to the wrinkles in each player's shorts.

WORLD TOUR SOCCER

RELEASED BY
Sony SCA
RATED BY
ESRB: E

WHAT IS THIS?
This sports sim
brings you the
game action,
tactical moves,
and more.
Only for the PSP
with some new
features and
wireless play.

IT COMES OUT
in Spring.

SOON AFTER
everyone.

HOW TO PLAY
Watch a two-
player head-to-
head play.

WORLD TOUR SOCCER

Sony's soccer sim is looking sweet

This game is jam-packed with features: there are 128 club teams (plus nine classic club teams), 86 international teams (plus nine classic international teams), seven league all-star teams, six international super teams, and eight different stadiums. You can even have the announcers broadcast in English, French, Italian, or Spanish.

The teams are closely patterned after their real-life counterparts — for instance, Brazil is loaded with athleticism and Ger-

many plays tough defense. Players can pull off a variety of special soccer moves like the shimmy, stop over and the header. You can choose to bend the Kick past a wall of defenders, or use Icon passing to have a striker volley the ball into the back of the net.

Play modes include Quick Game, Exhibition Match, Challenge Mode and Cups Mode. Or, you can have a go against a friend in wireless two-player head-to-head competition. Just the thing for footy fans on the go.

Whoever, Wherever

No matter where you live, the team might be, chances are good that World Tour Soccer has got you covered. The game features 128 club teams, 86 international teams, nine international classic teams from the past, nine classic club teams from the past, seven league all-star teams, six international super teams and eight different stadiums. Whew!



You can listen to the match called in English, French, Italian, or Spanish.



The developers promise an enhanced soccer presentation, featuring new animations, passionate celebrations, a TV-style presentation, enhanced lighting effects, new cut-scenes, and smooth gameplay to deliver the look, feel and passion that real soccer fans expect from their sport.



Gooooaaaalll! Breakdown

There are eight different stadiums in the game to add a little variety to the on-field action.

All of the many teams in the game play just like their real-life counterparts.

The game packs in about 245 total teams, meaning that you could play as a different team every day for about eight months!

World Tour Soccer uses PSP's beefy goodness to render real shadows and dramatic lighting.

Play for any of the seven cups including the Euro, South America and Americas cup.

World Tour's TV-style presentation offers various close-ups and camera angles to give you exciting views of the game.

COMING SOON TO PSP

These next games aren't going to be ready in time for launch, but were too cool to leave out of this guide. This is just the tip of the iceberg, though — new PSP titles are being announced every week, and there will quickly be plenty more where these came from!

Advent Shadow 082

Archer Maclean's Mercury 084

Coded Arms 086

Death Jr. 088

Hot Shots Golf 090

Infected 092

A Look Ahead 094



HOME



VOL

ADVENT SHADOW



Linear gameplay? No way. This game's all about big environments and big vehicles.

ADVENT SHADOW

PUBLISHED BY
Mitsumi

MADE BY
Fall Fat

WHAT IS THIS?
A story by Orson Scott Card (Star Trek's famed creator) serves as the backdrop for this sci-fi action game with fully destructible environments and plenty of vehicle and on-foot action.

IT COMES OUT
Sometime this year

ESRB RATING
Not yet rated

MULTIPLAYER
None to single player only

ADVENT SHADOW

For once, the Humans are the aliens

This PSP-exclusive adventure is based on Orson Scott Card's *Advent Trilogy*. The player controls Marin Steel, a mercenary pilot who gets caught up in an intergalactic saga when monstrous aliens invade the planet, determined to exterminate the human race. Could the power to repel the aliens lie within her?

In an effort to escape a dying world, Marin teams up with Gideon Wyeth, the unlikely hero of the original *Advent Rising* (along with a few other faces that should

be familiar to fans of the series). Marin will take on high-speed chases, aerial dog fights, tank battles, melee combat, and acrobatic platform gameplay set in massive, destructible environments.

She'll get to control heavily armed motorcycles, tanks, speeders and fighter craft, develop superhuman powers and wield an arsenal of weapons.

And hey, the soundtrack is even performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Los Angeles Orchestra. Sounds good so far!

The Great Escape

Marin Steel, the female lead of *Advent Shadow*, is as tough as they get when it comes to fighting — especially as her latent powers emerge. She's trying to escape a planet under siege, so blasting bad guys is just part of the adventure. She'll need to run, fly, and drive to get into space before the entire world goes and gets all explode-y on her.



Marin gets to bust out her mad *Matrix* skills on this unlucky alien bodice.



Advent Shadow is set in a future where inhabitants of the galaxy are awaiting the return of a legendary race known as... Humans. A violent race known as The Seekers wish to prevent the Humans' return at all costs, setting the stage for an all-out war against those who oppose them.



Bot Battlin' Breakdown

You'll always know what weapon type you're holding and how much ammo's left in it.

Orson Scott Card is one of the most revered sci-fi writers in history, and he's heavily involved in the creation of Advent Shadow's universe.

Marin has some very special powers, but even they will run out if you over-use them.



Whether she's dodging enemy fire or unleashing some of her own, Marin has an animation for everything.

Not all of the action is this straightforward. Expect plenty of platform and vehicular mayhem.

Robotic or organic, Marin's enemies are numerous, various, and all are very, very tricky to kill.

ARCHER MACLEAN'S MERCURY



No matter which level you're looking at, it's hard to take your eye off the shiny metal glob.

ARCHER MACLEAN'S MERCURY

PUBLISHED BY
Taito
Entertainment

MADE BY
Accession Studio

WHAT IS THIS?
A kind of Marble Madness-style action puzzle game where you control a glob of metallic goo.

IT COMES OUT
Soon (a firm release date awaits)

ESRB RATING
Everyone

MULTIPLAYER
Removes two-player head-to-head as better mode and cheat code.

ARCHER MACLEAN'S MERCURY

72 levels of fun brain-scratching

Here's something for the gamers with big brains to get excited about. Archer Maclean's Mercury is like a modern-day Marble Madness, but instead of rolling a marble, you control a glob of liquid metal. Also, as in Sega's Super Monkey Ball, you rotate the game world to slide your metal goo around.

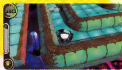
Because of the game's simple and intuitive analog control, Mercury should be a breeze for anyone to pick it up and play — but that doesn't mean it's a cake-walk.

There are 72 levels split among six worlds, packed with increasingly complex elements. Also, there are different types of play including Race modes, Challenge modes, Combo modes, bosses, and more. Plus, using the PSP's wireless connection, two players can go at it head-to-head on any of the game's levels. There's even a Ghost mode to compete on.

This PSP puzzler is sure to twist your brain as well as your reflexes — a potentially perfect portable combination.

Ebb and Flow

After a short spell in the training camp world, the game slowly ramps up as you make your way through each level from start to finish, eventually unlocking the next world beyond. You'll have to work your way around obstacles and hazards, solve puzzles, and compete against time and percentage limits, all while avoiding traps and predators.

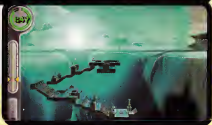


The levels keep getting crazier — doesn't this just intimidate the hell out of you?





These screens show off the game's incredible visual variety. With 72 total stages – spread out over six differently themed worlds – you'll be playing Mercury for a pretty long time. Well, unless you're some kind of super genius, or something. Well, are you? Are you a super genius?



Goopy Blob Breakdown



CODED ARMS



CODED ARMS

PUBLISHED BY
Gaming Portal
Entertainment
Media, Inc.

MADE BY
Gaming Computer
Entertainment
Media, Inc.

WHAT IS THIS?
A first-person
shooter that
takes place inside
of a spaceship
with a huge number
of weapons.

IT GOES OUT
to Samsara

EVER SAYING
This game has
not yet been
rated.

MULTIPLAYER
Up to four
people can play
wirelessly.

CODED ARMS

Hey, first-person shooter fans!

This PSP-original first-person shooter has a trippy set-up: you're a computer hacker, and all of the action takes place in an abandoned virtual reality system that was originally created as a combat training simulator to prepare for an alien invasion. Uh... you got that?

You'll use a whopping 30 different weapons (such as pulse rifles, sniper rifles, machine guns and grenades) against various enemies (Soldiers, Bugs, Bots, etc.), in five different game worlds (each with sub-levels). Any weapons or

power-ups that you find during the single-player game can be brought over and used in multiplayer mode, so you'll want to explore thoroughly to find bigger boom sticks than your play pals.

Up to four players can battle via wireless connection, making for the PSP's first true deathmatch experience in a first-person shooter. Also, the graphics are mighty impressive, with ultra-detailed environments — this looks to be one of the prettiest PSP games at launch. Coded Arms should be a no-brainer for shooter fans.

Virtual Insanity

The premise for Coded Arms is pretty original, and not quite what you'd expect. Years ago, a virtual reality combat training simulation was created to prepare our forces for an alien invasion. It was shut down after a major flaw was found in its system... or so its creators thought. It continued to evolve into a brutal world, and now you're trapped inside.

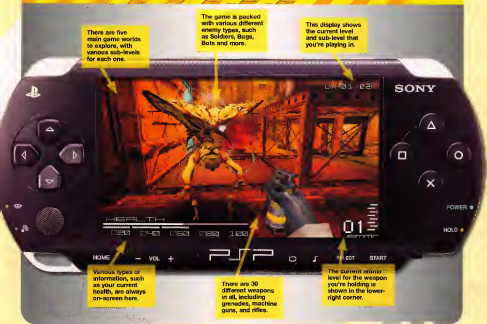




The vast VR world of Coded Arms is populated with virtual alien invaders, dangerous computer bugs and the system's own security bots. Hacking into the system was easy, but getting out is going to be hell. Good thing you've got 30 virtual weapons to deal out some digital damage.



Computer Bug Breakdown



DEATH JR.



The PSP's power is put to good use on special effects, such as the trail behind Jr.'s scythe.

DEATH JR.

PUBLISHED BY
Namco

MADE BY
Banbana
Entertainment

WHAT IS THIS?
You have to

LEAD RATING
This game hasn't

MULTIPLAYER
This is a single-

DEATH JR.

Deal out the family business!

You say you want original, never-before-seen games for your PSP? Well sir, have a look at *Death Jr.* It blends elements from first-person shooting games with third-person platforming action (kind of like *Ratchet & Clank*, only... loads different).

As the son of Death, you'll deal out the family business with dual pistols, a flamethrower, lightning gun, and exploding C4 hamsters. Plus, there are multiple scythe combos, special gun attacks and aerial maneuvers. And when the action gets really hairy, you can

fall back on "Pandora's Assistants" to set up multiple combos and deal major damage.

Also worth noting, this is one of the few early PSP games to use some of the system's specialized graphics effects, such as the flashy particle effects that accompany Jr.'s many attacks.

You'll be hearing a lot more from *Death Jr.* in the months to come — the game has already spawned a comic book from Image Comics, collectibles from Gentle Giant Toys, and even a feature film is on the way.

Death Jr.'s World

The game is packed with dark humor, which is evident in Jr.'s cast of friends. There's Pandora, an obsessive compulsive goth girl who has to open everything; Smith and Weston, super-smart conjoined twins; Stigmara, a girl who bleeds from her hands whenever she gets nervous; and the Seep, an armless, legless foreign exchange student. Yowza.



Soon *Death Jr.* will become a line of comics, toys, and is even set to become a feature film.

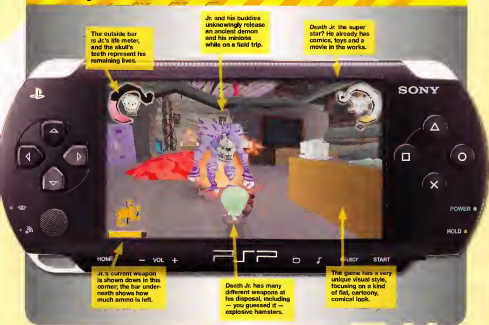




This game is jam-packed with action, and Jr.'s got the tools for the job. There's his family soythe, dual pistols, a lightning gun, a flamethrower, exploding C4 hamsters, and more. He can even use super attacks called "Pandora's Assist" when exploding hamsters just aren't enough.



Boney Breakdown



HOT SHOTS GOLF



For a game that's meant to be easy to play, *Hot Shots Golf* is deceptively deep.

HOT SHOTS GOLF

PUBLISHED BY
Sony CEA

MADE BY
Clip Haze

WHAT IS THIS? Arcade-style golf with cartoonish characters and deep gameplay. Lots of modes, lots of wackiness, a fun game even if you don't necessarily follow golf.

IT COMES OUT
to Summer

ESRB RATING
Everyone

MULTIPLAYER
Wireless tournaments for up to eight players

HOT SHOTS GOLF

Even non-golfers should try this

We've been playing this one night and day since the PSP launched in Japan last November, and it is soooo good. You don't have to be a real golf fan to enjoy the arcade-style (but still deep) action in *Hot Shots Golf*, and with six all-new courses, ten characters and over 50 outfits, accessories, clubs and balls to unlock, it'll keep you addicted for a long time.

Characters earn experience points based on how well you play, which, over time, will add up to

improve their skill in different areas. Also, each ball and set of clubs have their own strength and weaknesses, adding even more customization and strategy to the game. Which character type will you pair with which equipment?

And did we mention just how much wireless tournaments rock? Up to eight players can compete, all playing a hole simultaneously then meeting up afterwards to see how each other did. This is the ultimate "lazy Sunday" game to kick back with for hours on end.

Crazy Characters

Just like the *Hot Shots* games you know and love from PSone and PS2, the PSP version features a large cast of wacky characters. Keep in mind, though, that the golfers shown in all of these screens are from the Japanese version. Usually, Sony replaces the Japanese cast with all-new characters for the U.S. release. Why? You got us.



This game is just... that is, it's very... well, it's charming, that's what it is — and charming goes a long way.



Once the game brings up a course, there's absolutely zero loading time from hole to hole. This makes for an incredibly quick pick-up-and-play experience, and since you can freeze your current game state at any moment by putting the PSP to sleep, getting through 18 holes is easy.



Bunker Breakdown

This corner shows the distance to the cup and par. Underneath is listed how far you are above or behind the other golfers.

There are six brand-new courses exclusively for the PSP title, and each has its own distinct trails.

Up here you can check the current speed and direction of the wind, so you can adjust your shot accordingly.

Here you'll find the remaining distance to the hole, and underneath, your current club selection.

Little visual and audio clues hint at how well your swing was. A "!" means you're in trouble.

This corner shows your ball's current lie and the intended point of impact of your club.



INFECTED

012

075

Use your own blood to put down the infected — with extreme prejudice! Shoot them 'til they stop twitching!

INFECTED

PUBLISHED BY

Waypoint Games

MADE BY

Planet Moon Studios

WHAT IS THIS?

A gory, intense action shooter game with a lot of horror-like and some non-murder multiplayer features.

IT COMES OUT

Sometime this year, actual date not announced.

CORE GAME:

It hasn't been released yet, but likely "Bioshock" (though, for good).

MULTIPLAYER:

Wireless Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch.

INFECTED

Cure them until their heads pop off!

As the only person immune to a deadly new virus, it's rookie Officer Stevens's job to shoot bullets filled with her own blood at infected zombie-folk. You can play *Infected*'s fast-paced, two-gun action head-to-head against other players wirelessly in Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch modes, and even form your own clans with shared uniforms.

Perhaps the game's coolest feature is its "Chain Infection" — beat other players and your custom avatar will "infect" their

PSPs, and run around in their single-player game! Furthermore, your avatar can continue to spread from their PSP to others until you've "infected" the world!

It's exciting to see brand-new games developed from scratch for PSP, and this one looks like a doozy. This arcade-style, third-person shooter is just the thing for those that like their games gritty and gory, featuring massive chain reactions of exploding infected zombie-type folks that shower the streets with blood. Tasty.

Two Guns, No Waiting

Infected looks like one of the most action-paced PSP games we've seen so far. It's certainly one of the goriest titles, with exploding torsos and heads blowing off neck stumps like blood-propelled rockets. If the action is as hot as it looks, this could quickly become a top multiplayer game thanks to robust Deathmatch options.

The streets are crazy with... er, craziness. Hope your trigger finger is in good shape!

008

032





The infected pedestrians are really holding traffic up, and they're starting to smell up the neighborhood. Normal bullets won't kill them, but your blood will cause them to explode in very gross — yet strangely satisfying — ways. This city is infected... and you're the cure!



Bloody Breakdown

Even Santa's been infected... or, one of his helpers, we suppose. Make sure he never sees another parade.

You can really rack up the damage by setting off chain reactions of exploding infected.

This game's multiplayer looks like Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch — you can even create your own clans with shared uniforms!

This is the gun that Stevens is carrying in her left hand — a nice, old-fashioned boom stick.

As the only one immune to the infection, rookie officer Stevens is the our only hope to stop the outbreak.

This is the gun that Stevens carries in her right hand. Two gun action — much fun to be had by all.

THE FUTURE

Bleach



Ghost in The Shell: Stand Alone Complex



Gran Turismo 4 Mobile



The Godfather



MediEvil



Namco Museum PSP



You've just experienced almost 100 pages of PSP goodness, and the scary thing is that everything you've seen is something you can do/play/buy at or around launch. Yes, this is quite possibly the best hardware launch in the history of hardware launches, but we wouldn't just leave ya hanging without a quick sampling what's coming up later this year. Check it.

EA and Sony are dominating the launch window, and they're not looking to slow the pace. Both *The Godfather* and *Batman Begins* will be making their way over (presumably modified ports) courtesy of EA, and we've heard *Burnout*, *Metal of Honor* and *Madden* (duh) might be joining them. Sony will have *Gran Turismo 4 Mobile*, a confirmed port of the PS2 mega-hit, and it's also looking like we'll be seeing portable versions of every other Sony franchise, including *SOCOM*, *Jak*, and *Ratchet*. Sony Japan is even making *Bleach*, a cel-shaded fighting game based on the popular manga, while Sony Europe is hard at work on *MediEvil*.

Let's not forget the other guys. Capcom has confirmed that a *Devil May Cry* is in the works (yes!), and Rockstar has officially announced the inevitable: *GTA PSP*. This is the mother lode of all PSP games. Let's hope it can live up to our ridiculous expectations. In other Rockstar-related news, you should see a PSP version of *Midnight Club* very soon after launch.

It's easy to miss the smaller titles when you have such a barrage of A franchises, but there are a few that are definitely worth mentioning. Genki is hard at work on a *Tokyo Extreme Racer* (the fighting game of racers), Namco has both *Namco Museum* and *Tales of Eternia*, Codemasters is bringing the excellent *ToCA* series to the portable world, and Bandai found enough faith in *Ghost in the Shell* to make it portable. Not all of these have been confirmed for the U.S., but we'd be surprised if they didn't all make it over.

What's equally as exciting as new games are the new and unique ways companies will be utilizing the PSP. Expect to see everything from TV tuners to web browsers to MMORPGs as people learn the inner workings of the PSP and how to exploit it.

With an incredible launch list, tons of upcoming games (most of which we cannot mention here), and the first successful implementation of multimedia convergence, 2005 is truly the year of the PSP. We can only think back now to the old Patrick Swayze movie, *Ghost*: "You will believe."



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Blood
Language
Suggestive Themes
Violence

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A must for sci-fi fans, Rengoku tells the story of a battle android that has to fight its way out of a locked tower. There are customizable weapons and armor, randomized level generation and a multiplayer mode that lets you turn friends into scrap metal.



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